



# BROCKTON DOWNTOWN ACTION STRATEGY

*Building a strong, diverse, and attractive downtown to reclaim its role as anchor of the city and the region.*



# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

*The contributions of many Brocktonians made this document possible. They include:*

## **CITY OF BROCKTON**

Mayor Bill Carpenter

## **BROCKTON CITY COUNCIL**

Timothy Cruise, *Ward 1 and Council President*

Thomas Monahan, *Ward 2*

Dennis Eaniri, *Ward 3*

Paul Studenski, *Ward 4*

Anne Beauregard, *Ward 5*

John “Jack” Lally, *Ward 6*

Shirley Asack, *Ward 7*

Shaynah Barnes, *Councilor-At-Large*

Winthrop Farwell, Jr., *Councilor-At-Large*

Moises Rodrigues, *Councilor-At-Large*

Robert Sullivan, *Councilor-At-Large*

Rob May, *Director of Planning and Economic Development*

Shane O’Brien, *Staff Planner*

Pam Gurley, *Specialized Secretary*

## **MASSDEVELOPMENT**

Marty Jones, *President & CEO*

Claire M. O’Neill, *VP Planning & Development*

## **Brockton 21st Century Corporation**

Michael Gallerani, *Executive Director*

Gary Leonard, *Campello Main Street Manager*

## **Brockton Redevelopment Authority**

Robert Jenkins, *Executive Director*

## **Brockton Gateway Transformative Development Initiative (TDI) Partnership**

Shaynah Barnes—*Councilor-at-Large*

Gordon Carr—*GMC Strategies*

Pat Ciaramella—*Old Colony Planning Council*

Chris Cooney—*Metro South Chamber of Commerce*

Arnie Danielson—*Brockton Arts, Historical Commission*

Fran DeCoste—*TR Advisors*

Fred Fontaine—*South Shore Haitians United for Progress*

Bruce Hughes—*Old Colony Planning Council*

Robert Jenkins—*Brockton Redevelopment Authority*

Ray Ledoux—*Brockton Area Transit (BAT)*

Robert Malley—*Brockton Parking Authority*

John Merian—*Downtown Brockton Association*

Pastor Laudz Nicolas—*South Shore Haitians United for Progress*

Birute Silvia—*Brockton Garden Club*

Lynn Smith—*Frederick Douglass Neighborhood Association*

Veronica Truell—*Messiah Baptist Church, Housing Solutions for Southeastern Massachusetts*

John Yazwinski—*Father Bill’s & MainSpring*

Mathieu Zahler—*Trinity Financial*

Shirley Asack, *Councilor Ward 7*

Lucia Cerci—*Boys and Girls Club of Brockton*

Marlyn Amedee—*Haitian Community Partners*

Rev. Michael W. Walker—*Messiah Baptist Church*

## **The residents and business owners of Brockton**

## **CONSULTANT TEAM**

Stantec’s Urban Places Group

A.G. Jennings, LLC

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# 1: Executive Summary

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***The City of Brockton, with support by MassDevelopment, has developed an economic and redevelopment strategy that rethinks downtown's future. The Downtown Brockton Action Strategy is an implementation-focused plan that emphasizes a series of strategic development initiatives within the next five to ten years. Our fundamental goal is to build a strong, diverse, attractive downtown that can reclaim its role as anchor of the city and the metro south region.***

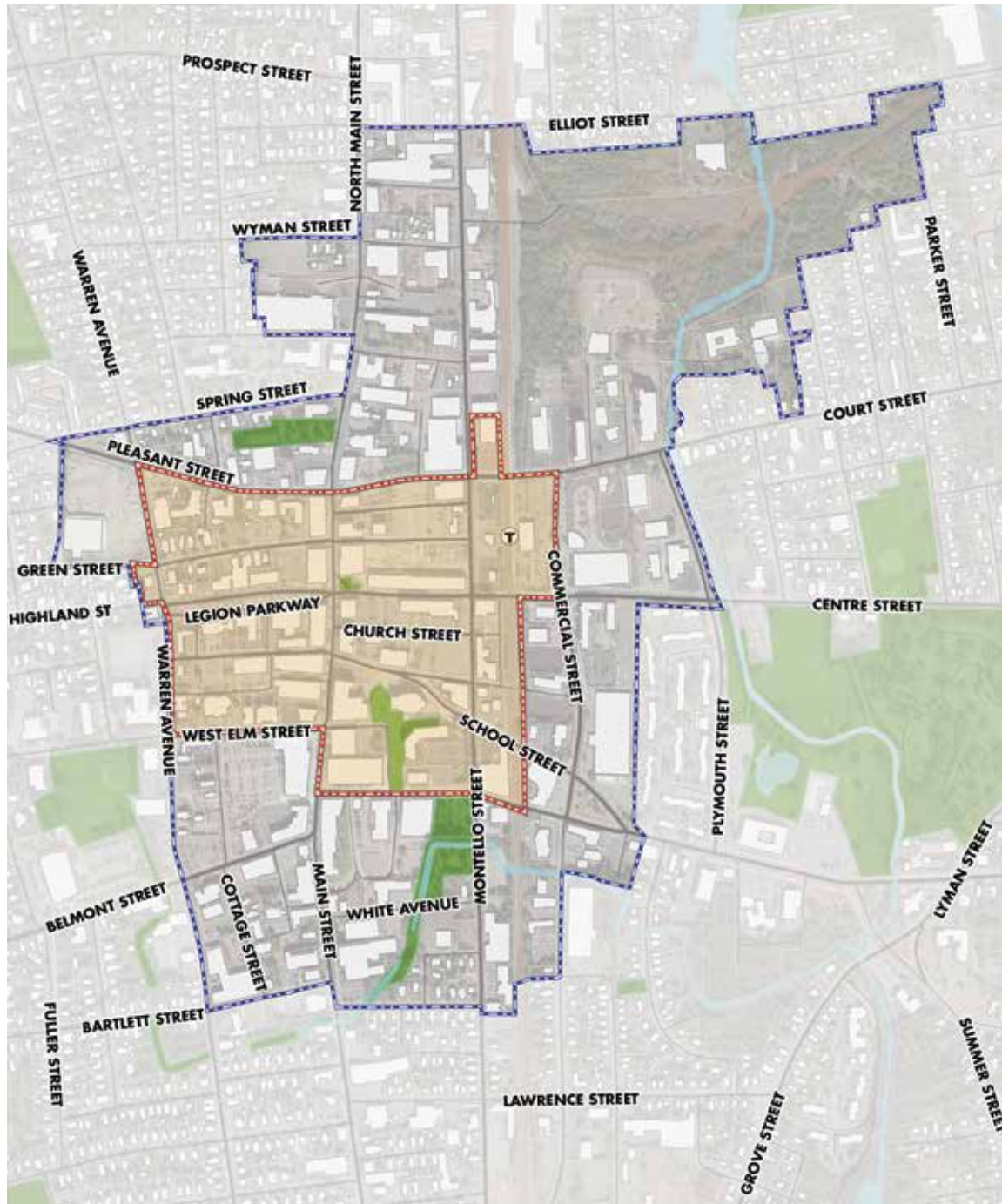
***The City launched this planning effort in July, 2015, as the first stage of the Brockton Gateway Transformative Development Initiative (TDI)\*. Brockton Gateway is a partnership among the City, Brockton 21st Century Corporation, and Trinity Financial, the firm redeveloping the Enterprise Block in downtown. MassDevelopment, the state's economic development and finance agency, chose Brockton for a TDI district in 2014. The TDI district extends from the MBTA commuter rail station to and along Main Street.***

***This plan identifies ways that Brockton can:***

- ***Attract new businesses and residents that contribute to the financial viability of the City.***
- ***Increase downtown's vibrancy***
- ***Attract a broader socio-economic mix of residents and businesses.***
- ***Arrive at the point of increasing property values—indicating that residents value being in downtown Brockton and are willing to pay for it.***

\* The Gateway Cities Transformative Development Initiative (TDI) is a place-based redevelopment program that builds on local public-private partnerships and community engagement to boost residential quality of life and spur economic activity. For additional information, please visit [www.massdevelopment.com](http://www.massdevelopment.com).

## Study Area



### LEGEND

-  Downtown Economic Redevelopment Strategy Area
-  Urban Revitalization Study Area





## WHY THIS PLAN?

*"I've lived here all my life. And all of my life, people have said downtown can come back to life, but the ball never got rolling. Now, though, for the first time, I really do believe the ball is beginning to roll."*

—Stakeholder interviewed for the Downtown Action Strategy

Positive changes are taking place in downtown Brockton: new buildings have been built, like the Station Lofts, the Enso Flats and Centre 50 within the Enterprise Block, and others have been rehabilitated, like W.B. Mason headquarters and the revitalized City Hall plaza. Rail access connects Brockton to downtown Boston and all of the amenities of a major metropolitan area in less than 35 minutes. And downtown Brockton is rich in historic structures, with a strong and intact urban block structure.

Cities across the U.S. increasingly find that economic success hinges on their ability to attract and retain innovative, educated workers and to promote the informal interaction and discovery that occurs in mixed-use, walkable,

diverse downtown neighborhoods. This will be the key to success for Brockton as well. Previous plans and residents alike have underscored the challenges still facing downtown, and this plan doesn't ignore them. But the downtown ball is indeed rolling; the Action Strategy's main purpose is to get it rolling faster and with more community participation.

### *Building on Previous Planning Efforts*

From the start of this initiative, it was clear that the City of Brockton had undertaken numerous planning activities focused on downtown. Much of Brockton's current success is built on these efforts. Nevertheless, the city lacked a comprehensive strategy for spurring investment with necessary focus, tools, and diverse community involvement.

Community participation played a critical role in this effort, but residents and stakeholders had already worked hard to establish a priority list of concerns and challenges. After reviewing more than a dozen previous plans, the planning team identified five as most relevant to this effort:



The *Downtown Brockton DIF Analysis* (2015); *Brockton EDSAT Report* (2014); *City of Brockton Development Planning: Downtown Report* (2011); *Downtown Brockton Market Study & Policy Recommendations* (2009); and the *Brockton Two Rivers Master Plan* (2008). These plans shared many consistent themes, arguing that downtown needed to

- Improve the mix of uses downtown (cafés, restaurants, other); activate the street level; and provide destinations for pedestrians.
- Address safety concerns; introduce a dedicated beat officer; improve lighting; and add pedestrian countdowns at crossing signals.
- Pursue creation of a historic district, or register properties on the National Register, and facilitate use of federal and state historic tax credits.
- Cross-market with state agencies and organizations; enhance marketing efforts to highlight improvements and attract businesses to the downtown.

- Optimize allocation of DIF revenue toward improvements in downtown.

These studies also included consistent infrastructure recommendations. The Action Strategy builds on these studies and will identify near- and long-term steps we can take to revitalize our urban core.

## Engaging the Community

On September 30, more than 50 people took part in a planning workshop to review and provide input on the Brockton Downtown Action Strategy. The highly diverse group listened to a presentation that highlighted national demographic trends and local opportunities for Brockton. They viewed a summary of previous planning and learned about the core strategies in the Action Strategy. Following the presentation, they worked in small groups to confirm the direction of the planning effort and provide a new set of shared priorities for the Action Strategy to address.



**During the public workshop, each participant wrote a description of what a revitalized downtown would look like in five to ten years. These represent some of the wonderful responses.**

*“A place I can escape to, walk around, enjoy the landscape, hear music, see all types of artists and performances, enjoy a snack or a meal and feel safe at all times. I would like to be able to sit outside and have friendly talks with others, have an area for children to play and tables and seats for people to talk or play chess.”*

*“Be clean; be well kept; be fun’ be vibrant; be lively; be a meeting place; be the place to go for dinner; be the place to see a band; be friendly; be a neighborhood; be proud; be beautiful.”*

*“Make me want to bring my family to events with a sense of security. I would like to frequent restaurants in a vibrant urban setting while feeling proud that I live here. I would like to spend my disposable income at the local businesses in the community where I pay my taxes.”*

# CORE ACTION STRATEGIES

The Downtown Action Strategy focuses on projects designed to increase downtown's vibrancy and attract more residents, employers and their employees, and visitors. These strategies reflect market realities—that is, the study team shaped and tested them against market data, likelihood of finding funding, and collaboration with key stakeholders. The plan phases these projects to accommodate parking and other needs of current businesses and residents in downtown.

The Action Plan groups the core strategies under these objectives. Details on supporting actions and initiatives appear throughout this strategy.

- **Increase residential density downtown.** Downtown has room to increase its housing supply. The Action Strategy calls for increased residential density by leveraging 40R Smart Growth Zoning districts while advertising potential development sites to developers.
- **Re-establish the feel of a vibrant downtown.** Downtown has limited amenities. The Action Strategy calls for expanded amenities—including restaurants, a pharmacy, and a dry cleaner—to serve new and existing residents, employees, and visitors.
- **Continue to improve public safety.** Residents, businesses, and owners all express concern about crime and safety. The Action Strategy calls for more foot/bike patrols; better lighting; the launch of a Clean, Green, and Safe Ambassadors program; creation of a unified homeless-services center; and strategies to maintain recent gains in safety and to boost the perception of safety.
- **Continue efforts to create a Downtown Brockton Higher Education Collaborative.** Over several years, organizations have advanced the idea of a collaborative approach to community education. The Collaborative intends to provide a seamless and supportive

environment for high school completion; English for non-native speakers; educational certification; credentialing; targeted workforce-skills training; and associate, baccalaureate, and post-baccalaureate degree programs.

- **Encourage entertainment venues and cultural organizations to locate downtown.** Entertainment destinations bring visitors, who in turn create demand for businesses like restaurants, coffee shops, and stores. Brockton should focus on attracting new performance venues and persuading existing cultural organizations to establish a presence downtown.
- **Promote diversity of community.** Brockton's existing diversity can play a key role in the success of downtown. Helping ethnic restaurants, boutiques, and food stores to locate downtown would highlight the city's many communities and create new downtown destinations.
- **Actively target new small-business entrepreneurs.** Encourage or help establish co-working space, breweries and small-batch distilleries, maker spaces, and pop-up retail locations that create opportunities for entrepreneurs across the region.
- **Improve connectivity,** both within downtown and between downtown and the rest of Brockton. Rethinking one-way streets (already underway), creating a wayfinding strategy, and improving the major gateway corridors into downtown will greatly enhance the accessibility of the city's core.
- **Upgrade infrastructure.** Downtown's electrical infrastructure lacks needed capacity in many places. As new development occurs, electrical and other infrastructure must be improved to support today's uses.
- **Actively market downtown.** The Action Strategy calls for several marketing initiatives: providing information to new residents and visitors, marketing to new potential developers, and launching a new marketing campaign for downtown itself.





## QUICK FIRST STEPS

The planning process found multiple initiatives that could start very quickly. Low-cost and

relatively easy to achieve, these early initiatives could immediately improve conditions in downtown and—especially important—send the clear message that downtown is on the upswing.

**Adopt the Urban Renewal Plan (URP) and District Improvement Financing (DIF) program to authorize action**

The first step in implementing the Action Strategy will be formal adoption of the URP Plan and DIF Program by City Council. The URP authorizes the City to acquire strategic properties identified within the plan, and the DIF program provides important financial resources for infrastructure improvements, property acquisition and many of the programmatic elements outlined in the plan.

**Transfer tax-foreclosed properties to the Brockton Redevelopment Authority**

To support the key Action Strategy of the rehabilitation and redevelopment of vacant or underutilized properties within the study area, the City should transfer strategic foreclosed properties to the Brockton Redevelopment Authority. The Authority will work with the Department of Planning and Economic Development to solicit qualified partners for redevelopment partners and invest the sales proceeds into other Urban Revitalization Plan projects.

**Establish a downtown manager.**

Establish a downtown manager position to lead the implementation of the plan and its recommendations. The successful implementation of the Action Strategy should be managed by a professional with the experience, capacity, and time to commit to the effort. The City should also consider creating a Business Improvement District or similar funding mechanism to support the downtown manager and programming activities.



### **Develop a business plan for a restaurant incubator on Frederick Douglass Avenue.**

One catalyst project identified in the Action Strategy is conversion of 11/15 Frederick Douglas Avenue, which the City owns, into a restaurant incubator. This incubator would house a changing array of street-level dining options run by entrepreneurs testing concepts for restaurants with minimal financial risk. An expanded commercial kitchen at the site could also give other food-focused businesses access to a professional facility, helping them expand their operations. The City of Brockton has already applied for and won funding to develop a business plan for operating the incubator.



### **Permit—and promote—sidewalk dining and food trucks.**

Current zoning and health department regulations forbid outdoor eating. The planning department is actively working to change zoning to allow this use to occur throughout downtown.



### **Establish a cultural and entertainment task force.**

Establish a task force on cultural and entertainment facilities to identify sites and venues for cultural programming, including a new performance center for the Brockton Symphony and other cultural organizations.





## Add more programming and events.

The community has embraced the farmers

market as an exciting new amenity for downtown. Build on this success by creating new or attracting existing events to occur at least monthly in spring, summer and early fall.



## Set up a 'Clean, Green, and Safe Ambassadors' program.

These ambassadors will create additional "eyes on the streets," discourage inappropriate

behavior, remove litter, and maintain planters and/or hanging flower baskets. Proven in other cities, this is an effective and relatively affordable way to dramatically improve the perception of safety downtown. The Ambassadors program should get underway by summer 2016.

## Re-establish the homelessness task force.

Residents, workers, and business owners who took part in the planning process repeatedly raised questions about downtown's homeless population. These ranged from concerns for

the welfare of homeless people to worries that a large homeless population makes other visitors feel unsafe downtown. The City should re-establish a task force focused on developing policies and recommendations that promote a citywide "housing first" approach to homelessness and the relocation of the existing emergency shelter to a more proximate location with 24-hour services.



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# DRAWING IN MORE RESOURCES

The Action Strategy includes an urban revitalization plan (URP) that meets the requirements of Massachusetts General Law 121B and that supports the strategy. Building on earlier plans, which also called for a URP, this became a critical early implementation step under the Action Strategy. The URP:

- Includes a financial plan to allocate district improvement financing (DIF) funds, 40R funds, and other revenue to priority infrastructure and operating improvements.
- Builds directly on Action Strategy recommendations and provides the City the legal tools it needs to implement the plan.
- Focuses on “infill development” that targets gaps along the street and stimulates reinvestment in existing buildings.

The City created a Citizens Advisory Committee under the URP. It held public meetings and workshops to keep residents, business owners, and others fully involved in planning for downtown. The Action Strategy will function as a blueprint for achieving redevelopment success and increasing the vitality and value of downtown. The DIF, zoning changes, and the urban revitalization plan will all help stimulate private investment. That, in turn, will generate revenue that directly supports further public investment in downtown improvements. The Action Strategy builds on this concept of “growth paying for growth.” It is fundamental to the Action Strategy’s recommendations.

## GETTING STARTED: SIX CATALYST DEVELOPMENTS

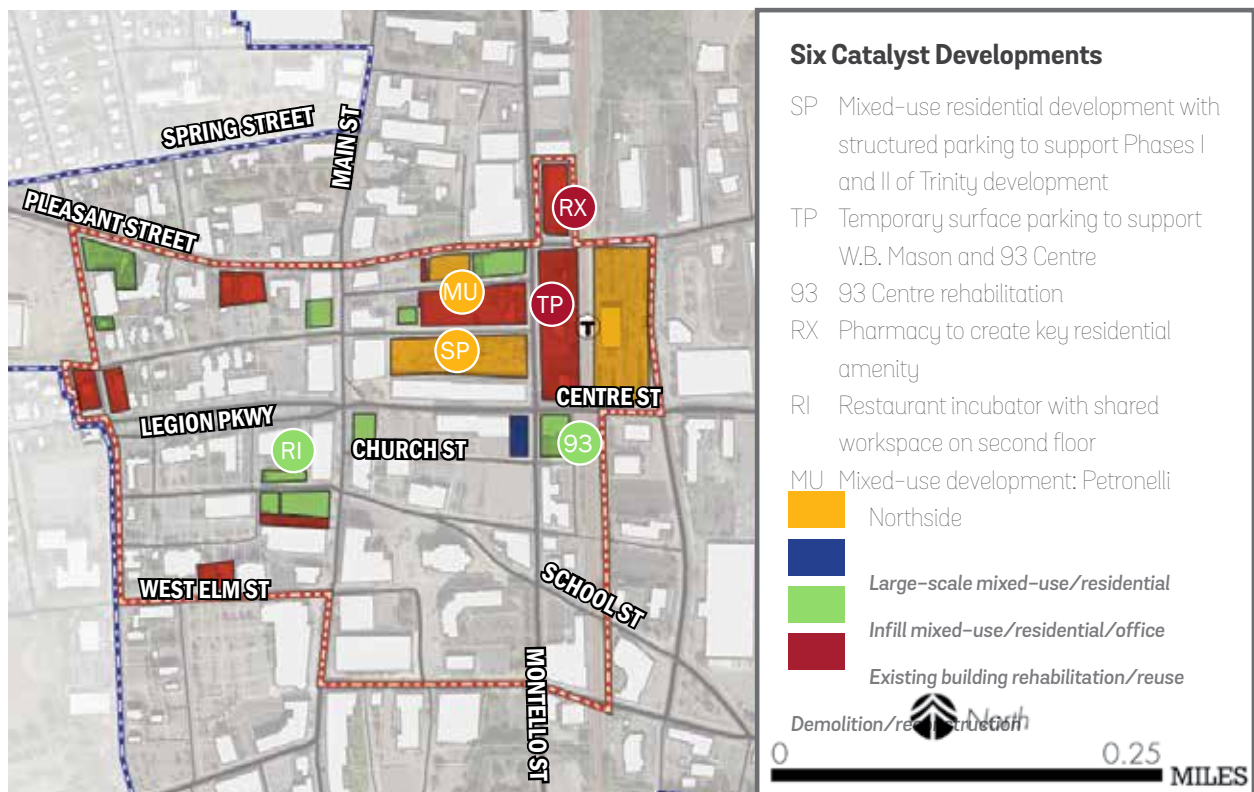
The Action Strategy identifies six catalyst developments—projects whose construction can encourage and inspire other projects and spread revitalization success throughout downtown.

As the study team evaluated the locations and types of projects most likely to succeed, it looked at multiple variables for each one: access to the commuter rail station, the presence or absence of sizable city-owned properties, market conditions, and other factors. The redevelopment of the Enterprise Block provided a strong model for the scale and type of development that downtown could support and benefit from. This analysis, which evolved through numerous scenarios, ultimately made it clear that Brockton would see the biggest impact from

clustering multiple projects in one central area. Development of this scale, however, requires careful phasing in order to satisfy parking needs and allow the most efficient construction staging. An equally important consideration was allowing enough time to negotiate the public/private financing strategies that most of these projects will likely require.

### *A Phased Approach*

Even the most successful plans take years to complete; we anticipate that our recommendations will need to occur over ten years. The next four pages show the recommended development sequence for the six catalyst projects. The phasing described here takes into account current conditions in downtown, existing needs for parking and other services, market potential, and the time needed for a proposal to move from initial idea to completed building.



# Petronelli Way Housing, 93 Centre Street and wPetronelli Building

YEARS 1-3



**Rehabilitation of Petronelli Building**  
*(not a catalyst development)*

**Rehabilitation of 93 Centre**  
60 housing units

**Petronelli Way Housing**  
135 units + 33-stall surface parking lot

**Temporary Parking Lot**  
210 stalls





## Enterprise Phase II and Pharmacy

YEARS 3-5



**Municipal Parking Facility**  
400-stall parking garage

**New Pharmacy**  
13,000 gsf

**Enterprise Phase II**  
102 housing units

## Montello Street Mixed-Use

YEARS 5-10



### Montello Street Mixed-Use Development

130 units of housing + 9,000sf of retail + 150 parking stalls (structured, one level)



# Future Build-Out

## YEARS 10 AND BEYOND



**Commercial Street mixed-use development**  
155 units of housing + 9,000sf of retail +  
260 parking stalls (structured, two levels)

**Future Commercial  
Development**





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## 2: Existing Conditions

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***This chapter explores new opportunities that shifting demographics and changing markets have created when combined with Brockton’s physical, social and economic assets. As more people throughout the U.S. increasingly express a preference for living in walkable urban environments and seek access to amenities like restaurants, parks and diverse neighborhoods, underused properties in downtown may soon be ripe for redevelopment.***

### CONTEXT

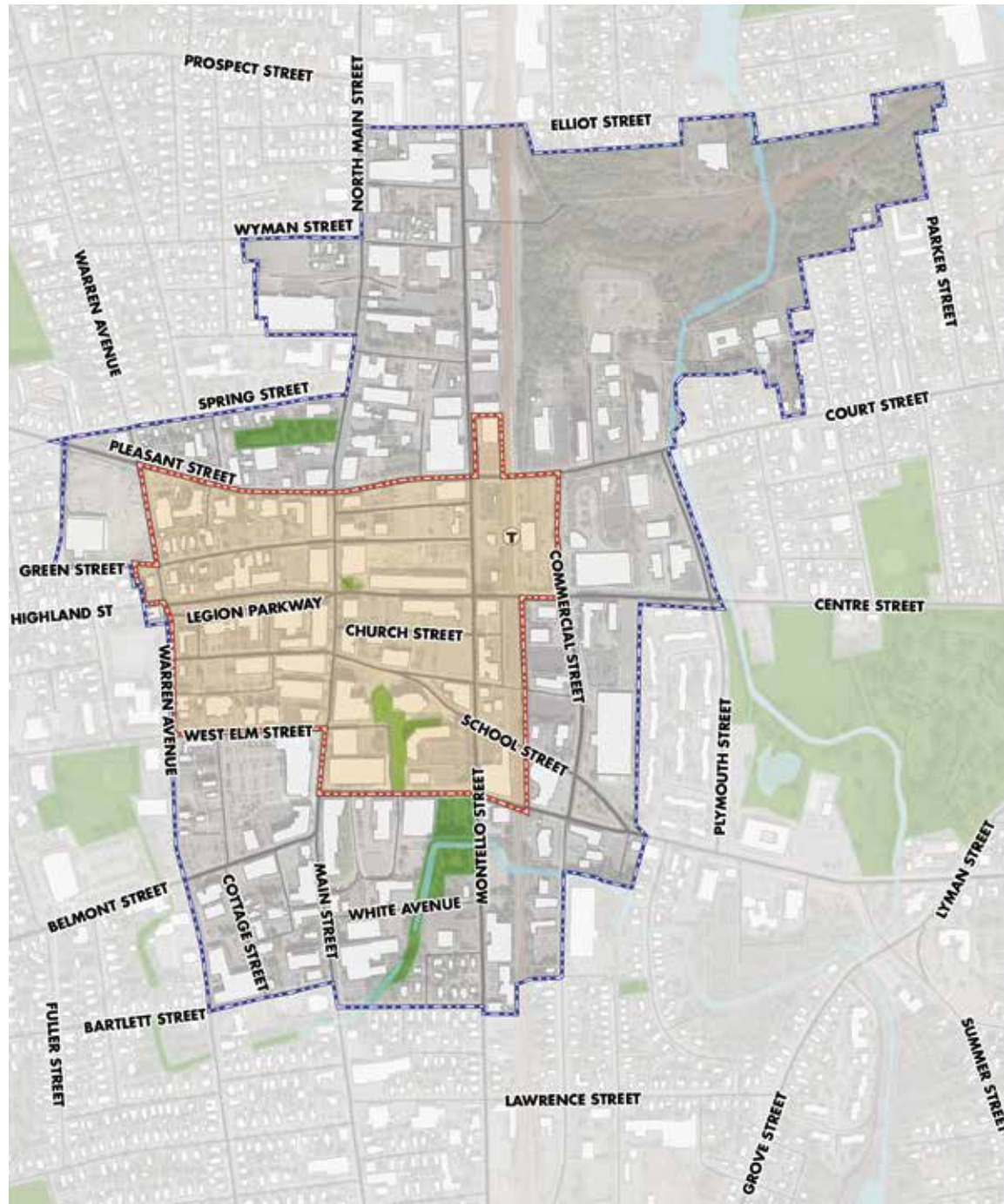
Brockton is the seventh-largest city in Massachusetts, with 94,017 residents, according to the 2010 US Census. It sits approximately 25 miles south of Boston and 30 miles northeast of Providence. The city’s founders set it on the banks of the Salisbury Plain River, which once powered the factories in the city’s core.

The buildings and streets of downtown cluster around the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) commuter rail station and several historic buildings.

The maps on the following pages highlight the boundary of the study area for this Action Plan and locate the existing historical buildings and places within downtown Brockton.



## Study Area



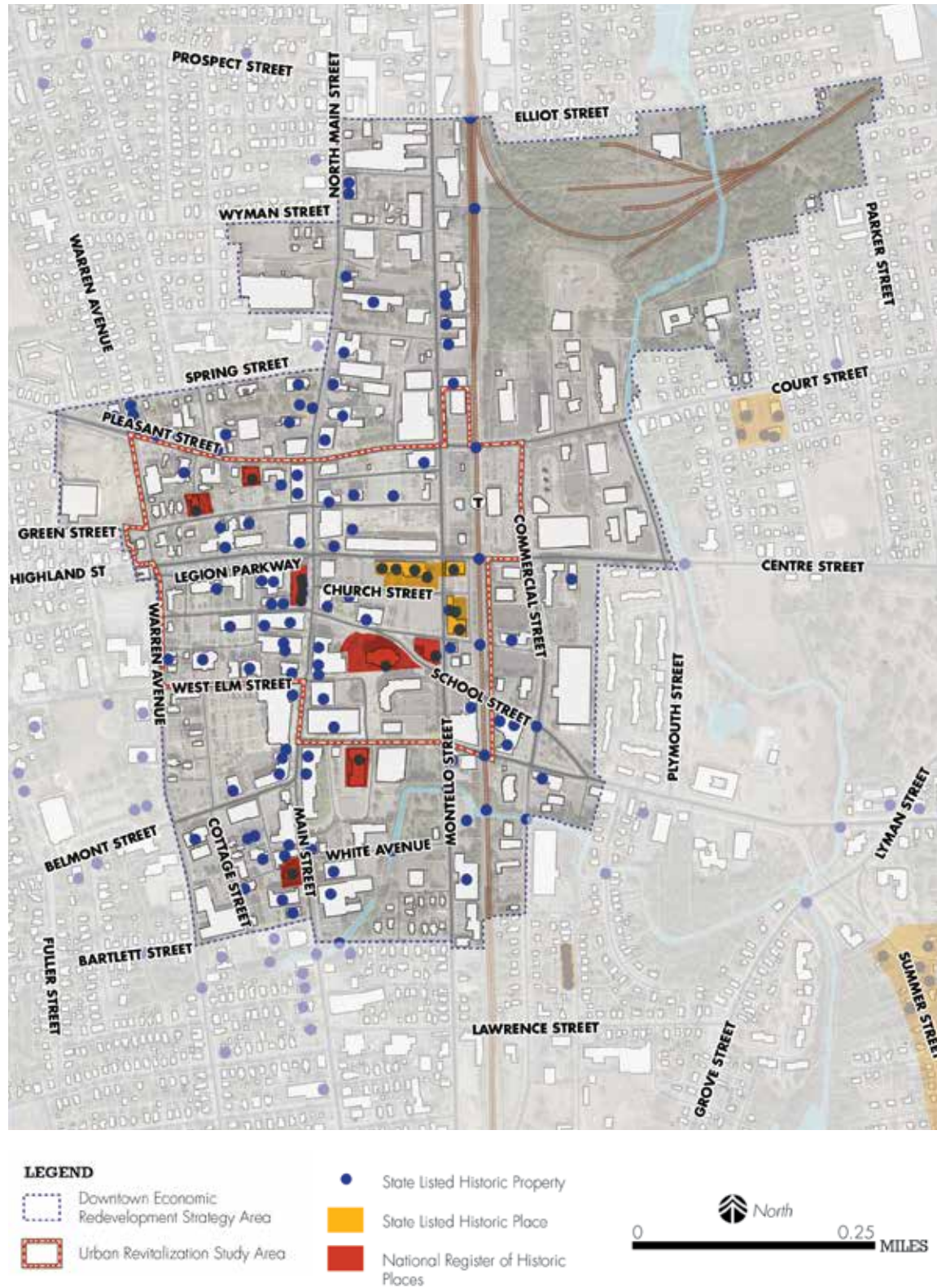
### LEGEND

-  Downtown Economic Redevelopment Strategy Area
-  Urban Revitalization Study Area





## Historic Properties





## Demographics

Brockton is a diverse city. According to the 2010 US Census, 31.2% of residents are black or African American, 46.7% are white, 2.3% are Asian, 0.4% are American Indian, 12.5% identify as other races, and 6.9% identify as two or more races, (10.0% of any of these races are Hispanic or Latino). Brockton has the largest population of Cape Verdean ancestry of any city in the United States, with 9.0% of residents reporting this ancestry. The average household in Brockton has 2.8 people and a median age of 36.

The downtown study area has a higher rate of African Americans (36.9%), higher rate of Hispanic people (15.8%) and lower rate of white residents (32.3%) than Brockton as a whole.

Households in the study area tend to be somewhat smaller than in the rest of the city with an average size of 2.1 people, and they tend to have fewer cars. (The average car-ownership level for households within downtown—just 0.7 cars, or less than one per household—strongly supports the Action Strategy’s recommendation of lowering required car spaces to 0.8 for new development.) A wide discrepancy in household income levels in the study area suggests the presence of a greater-than-average proportion of affordable housing units. Citywide, age groups are spread relatively evenly among children, adults and the elderly. In educational attainment, downtown residents skew slightly lower than the rest of the city.

## SHIFTING MARKET REALITIES

### Changing Demographics

Brockton faces the same evolving paradigms that confront many similar cities across the United States. From 1950 until the late 1990s, families with children represented the largest demographic group in the United States. In 2015, singles and couples represent the majority of households in virtually every region of the country. From the 1950s until the late 1990s, homogeneous housing markets led to mass-produced homes and suburbs. In 2015, we have become a “nation of niches,” in the Urban Land Institute’s apt phrase, in which people seek a variety of housing options. From 1950 to the 1990s, people under 50 consistently represented the largest share of population growth, but in 2015, people over 65 represent the largest share of population growth in most regions.

### Shifts in Market Preferences

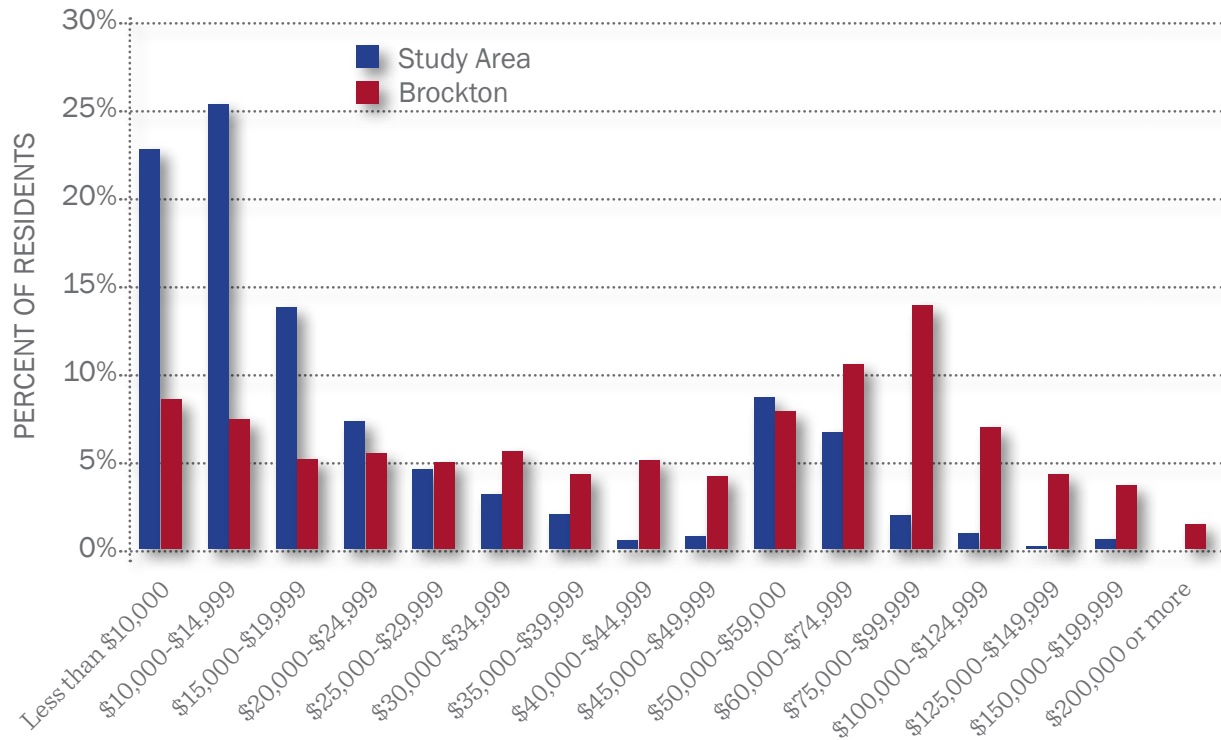
These demographic changes translate into new rising demand for new kinds of housing. Young adults (“Millennials,” born between 1980 and 2000) and empty-nesters (parents whose children have moved away, primarily “baby boomers” born between 1945 and 1960) increasingly prefer to live in the center of cities, within walking

#### POPULATION, HOUSEHOLDS, AGE AND VEHICLE OWNERSHIP

	STUDY AREA	BROCKTON
Total population	1,372	93,911
Total households	657	32,856
Total housing units	758	36,338
Average household size	2.09	2.76
Average number of vehicles available	0.67	1.40
Median age	36	36

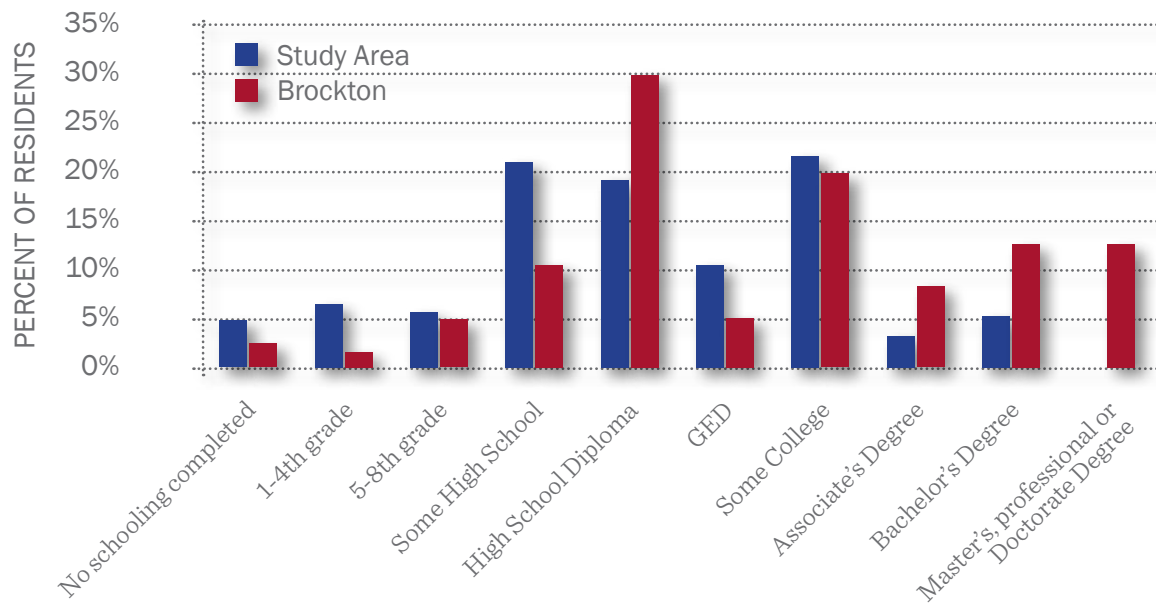
Source: American Community Survey 2009-2013 Estimates and 2010 Census Profile—ESRI Business Analyst Online

## HOUSEHOLD INCOME



Source: American Community Survey 2009-2013 Estimates and 2010 Census Profile—ESRI Business Analyst Online

## EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT IN POPULATION 25+ YEARS OF AGE

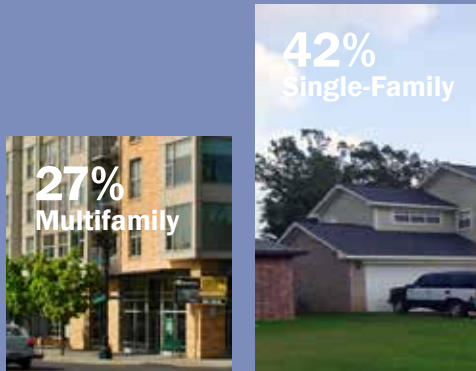


Source: American Community Survey 2009-2013 Estimates and 2010 Census Profile—ESRI Business Analyst Online

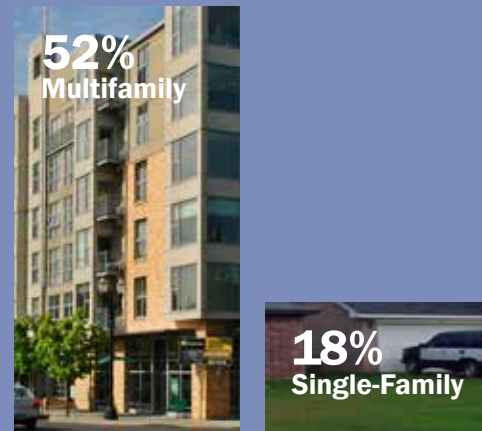
## The Great Inversion

Because of shifting demographics, including an aging population and changes in household size and makeup, the housing market will look very different in 15 years than it does today.

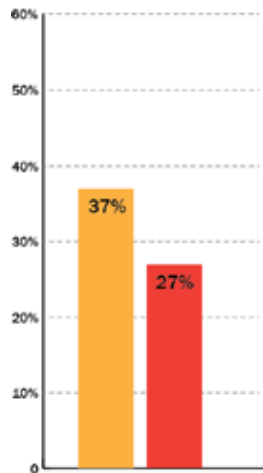
Existing housing supply (2008)



Projected housing demand, 2008–2030



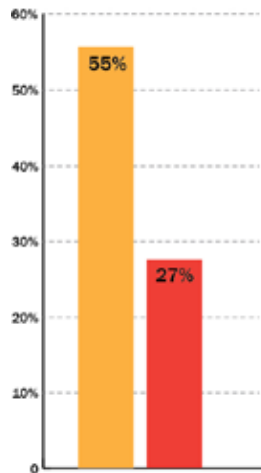
BUILT-IN MARKET:  
SENIORS AND MILLENNIALS



Within 10 miles of downtown

- Demand (seniors and millennials)
- Supply (rental as % of total units)

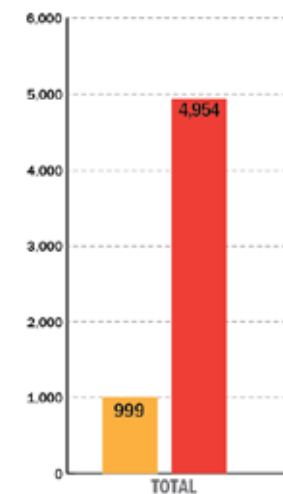
BUILT-IN MARKET:  
1- AND 2-PERSON HOUSEHOLDS



Within 10 miles of downtown

- Demand (1- or 2-person hhds)
- Supply (rental as % of total units)

BUILT-IN MARKET:  
HOUSING NEAR JOBS



Study Area

- Working-age population (20-69)
- Jobs

distance of amenities like restaurants and parks. This demand is driving new development and construction in urban areas as well as first-ring suburbs, streetcar suburbs, medium-sized towns and cultural destinations. While the dream home

of 1990 included a large back yard, a location far from work, and convenient car access, demand has risen dramatically for walkable streets, access to transit, diverse neighbors, a shorter commute to work, and environmentally



sustainable communities. Knowledge workers are now urban: roughly two-thirds of educated, creative workers under 35 seek walkable urban places to live. Between 2000 and 2009, the number of college-educated 25-34-year-olds living in or close to downtowns jumped 26% in the 51 biggest US metro areas.

### “The Great Inversion”

This shift has flipped the relationship between housing supply and demand on its head. In 2008, 27% of national existing housing took the form of multifamily units (apartments, condominiums, townhomes) while 42% of the supply took the form of single-family homes. Projections for the period 2008-2030, however, show that 52% of demand for housing will be for multifamily units, and only 18% of demand will be for single-family homes.

### Supply and Demand in Brockton

Market preferences for housing are shifting alongside demographics. Statewide and nationally, seniors and Millennials prefer rental housing, as do small households (1-2 people). People also increasingly want to live near where they work or near transit that can get them to work.

### Not Enough ‘There’ There

A truly livable downtown needs the right mix of amenities within a short walk, bike ride, bus trip or drive. This includes neighborhood retail and pharmacies to support the daily needs of workers and residents, as well as restaurants to serve employees and attract visitors. While a few of these amenities, along with some residents and employees, now exist in downtown Brockton, there aren’t enough of them. Choices are frustratingly limited. For example, 83% of downtown residents, workers, and visitors in a recent survey said they wanted more restaurants.

The table below highlights the results of two market analyses of data provided by the Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI) and Nielsen. While restaurant demand appears low in this analysis, that’s because Brockton has numerous takeout and other fast food restaurants. The community has long expressed a need for quality sit-down restaurants, for which the demand is likely much higher.

Downtown Brockton already has many of the qualities that could attract new kinds of residents—including transit, multifamily housing, walkable streets, and historic character—but it needs to take conscious, coordinated steps to reinforce them and add new elements that strengthen the city’s appeal. This Action Strategy describes a program designed to do just that.

Amenities that support livability and foster walkability	How under-served is the downtown market? (demand/supply within a 1-mile radius of 50 Centre St.)		
	ESRI	NIELSON	AVERAGE*
<b>GROCERY STORE**</b>	4.4x	2.2x	Demand is <b>3.3x</b> local supply
<b>NEIGHBORHOOD RETAIL</b>	10.0x	1.6x	Demand is <b>5.3x</b> local supply
<b>PHARMACIES</b>	8.7x	1.6x	Demand is <b>5.2x</b> local supply
<b>RESTAURANTS</b>	1.5x	1.9x	Demand is <b>1.7x</b> local supply

\* Because ESRI and Nielson data gauge the retail market from different perspectives, averaging their indicators provides a more comprehensive and reliable understanding than considering them independently.

\*\* Grocery supply was calculated before the opening of Vicente’s.

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## *Unrealized Potential*

In addition to latent demand for new housing and retail, the characteristics of existing properties in downtown also create opportunities for redevelopment. Low land values, modest building values, and property-utilization rates show that opportunities exist for rehab, infill, and/or large-scale redevelopment near the commuter rail station. The maps on the following pages illustrate these characteristics.

## *Concurrent Planning Initiatives*

The City of Brockton has also enacted policy to ensure that, as development and redevelopment takes place they create new resources to support public investment downtown.

Following recommendations from prior planning efforts, a District Improvement Financing (DIF) district was created in 2015 under the state's Chapter 40Q. Within the district, additional property tax revenues generated by new investment in downtown will be available for the City to direct toward implementation of the redevelopment strategies described in this plan. DIF revenues can support a range of eligible purposes, including public infrastructure investments. The DIF district is an important foundation for this Action Plan; it ensures that progress toward redevelopment will produce new revenues that can support ongoing plan implementation. As noted earlier, this is part of the plan's reliance on the concept of "growth paying for growth."

Smart growth zoning (a "40R district") represents another financing source, as each residential unit constructed within a 40R district yields \$3,000 of unrestricted funds to the City. Expansion of the 40R district, which has been proposed separately and is currently

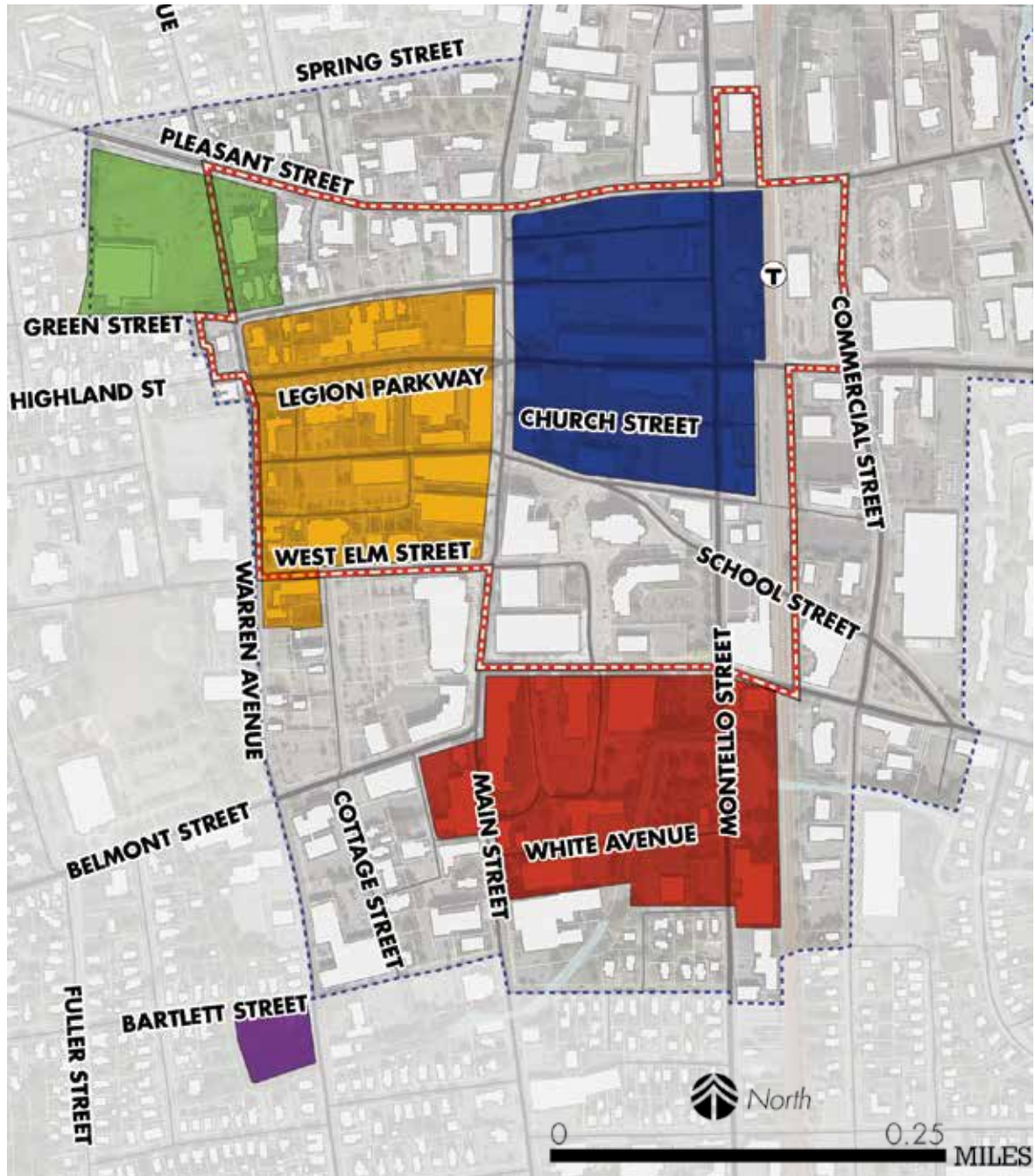
under review, would broaden opportunities for renovation and new development, with a corresponding increase in potential buildout and both 40R and DIF revenues.

At the same time as this planning effort, an urban revitalization plan (URP) that meets the requirements of Massachusetts General Law 121B is underway for downtown. It will include a financial plan for allocating funds from the DIF, 40R district, and other identified sources toward priority infrastructure improvements and operational expenses. The URP will build directly on the Action Strategy recommendations and provide the City with legal tools necessary to implement this plan.

Guided by the recommendations of this Action Strategy, the DIF, the 40R district expansion, and the URP will help stimulate new private investment that generates revenue to support continued public investment in downtown improvements. In other words, the growth spurred by these planning efforts will pay for even more growth.

The maps on the following page show some of the key characteristics of the study area.

## 40R Zoning Overlay Districts



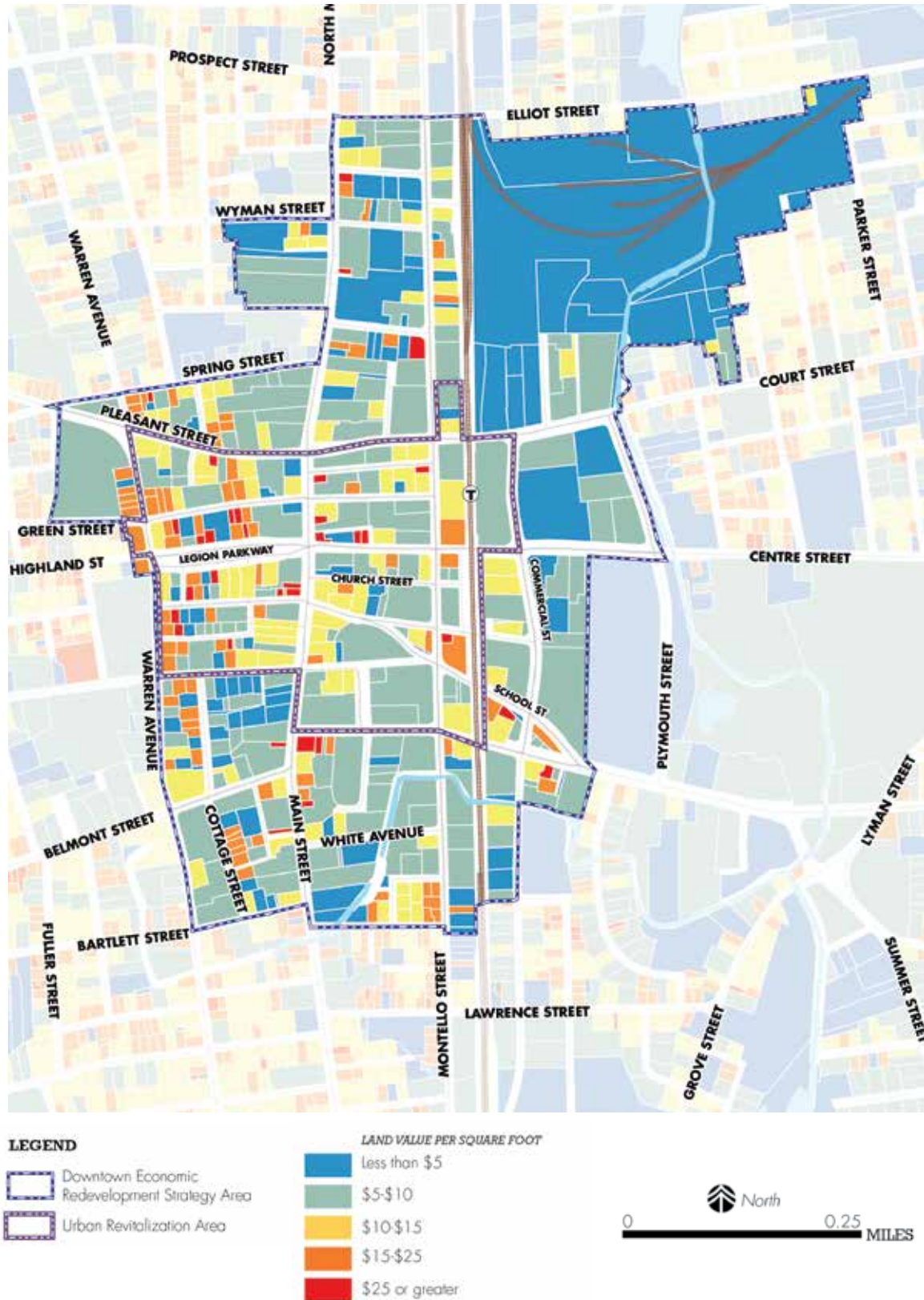
### LEGEND

- Downtown Economic Redevelopment Strategy Area
- Urban Revitalization Study Area

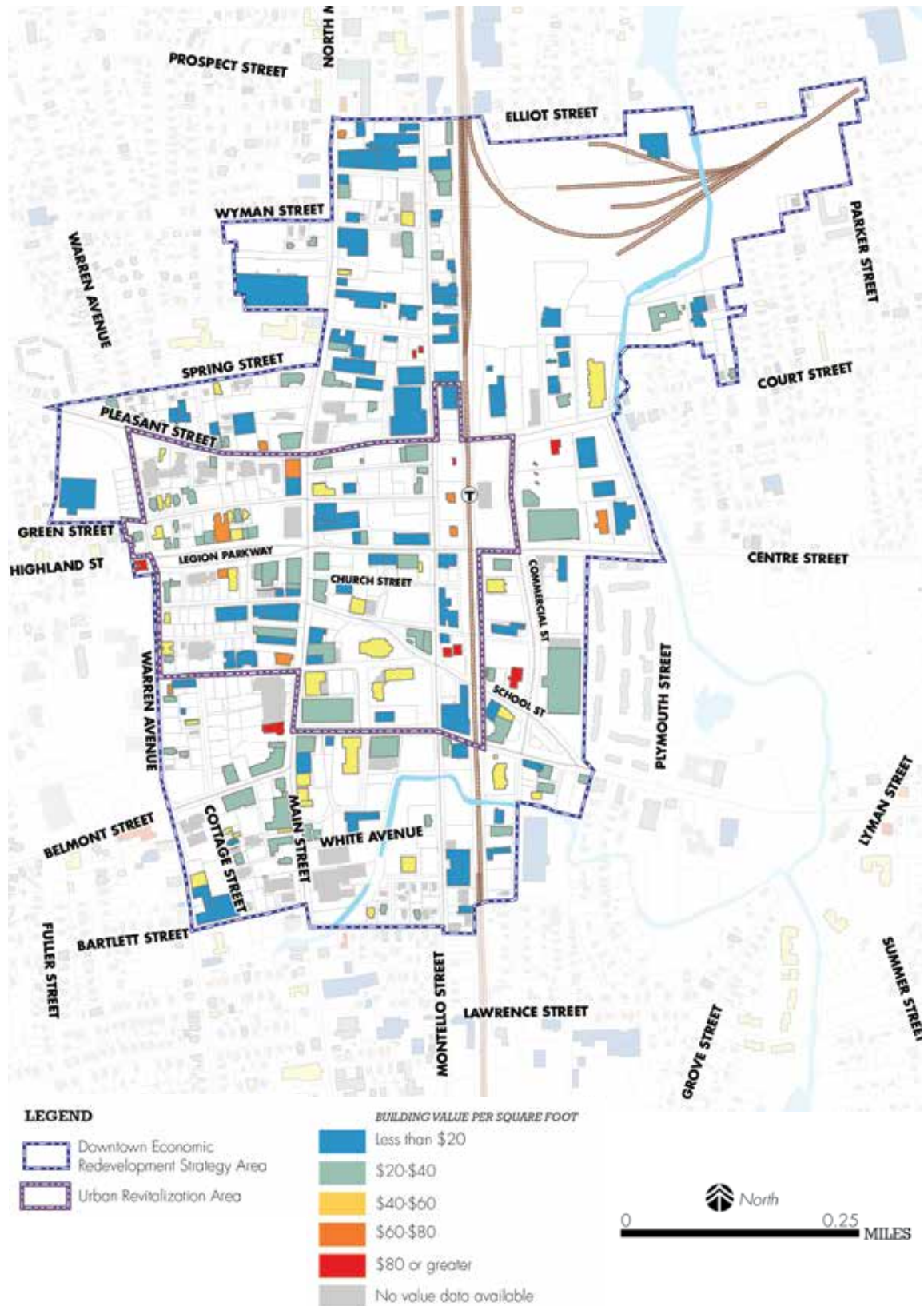
- Downtown Core 40R Sub-district
- Arts/Culture 40R Sub-district
- Star Market 40R Sub-district
- Corcoran 40R Sub-district



## Land Value

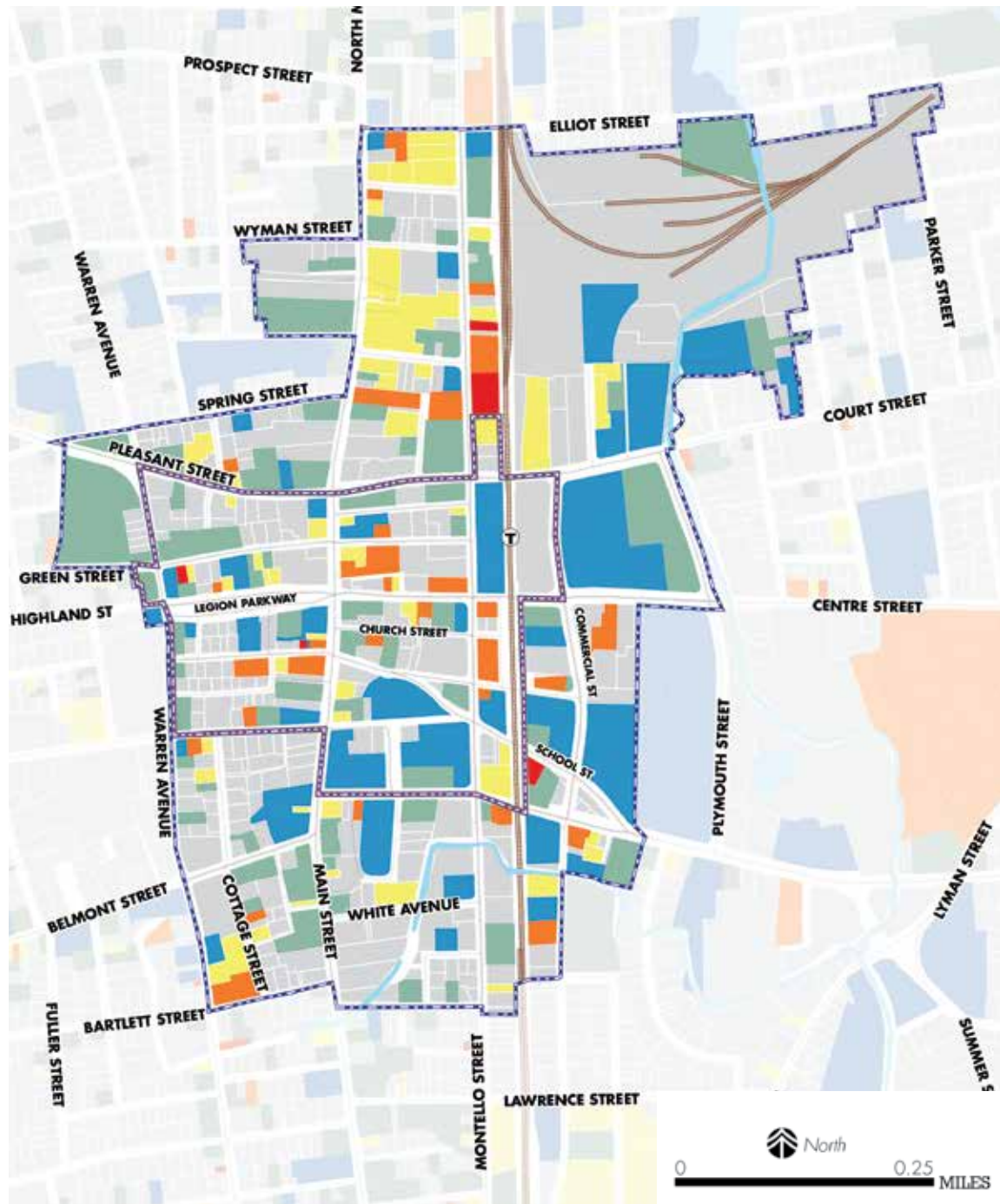


## Building Value





## Land Utilization\*



### LEGEND

- Downtown Economic Redevelopment Strategy Area
- Urban Revitalization Area



Land utilization is a measure of total property value compared to building value. Properties with low utilization rates are not being used to their full potential.

$$* \text{Land utilization} = \frac{(\text{Building Value})}{(\text{Building Value} + \text{Land Value})}$$



# 3: Previous Plans

**The City of Brockton has already completed several plans intended to address redevelopment and improvements in downtown. The study team reviewed all of them as part of the Downtown Action Strategy process, and found that six recommendations appeared consistently among them: revitalizing downtown, improving the mix of uses downtown, addressing safety concerns, pursuing creation of a historic district, cross-marketing downtown with other agencies, and optimizing the allocation of revenue toward improvements downtown. Each of these plans also consistently recommend improvements in downtown infrastructure.**

## PREVIOUS PLANNING

The plans reviewed as part of the Downtown Action Strategy include the *Downtown Brockton Market Study & Policy Recommendations* (2009), the *City of Brockton Development Planning: Downtown Report* (2011), the *Brockton EDSAT Report* (2014) and the *Downtown Brockton District Improvement Financing Analysis* (2015).

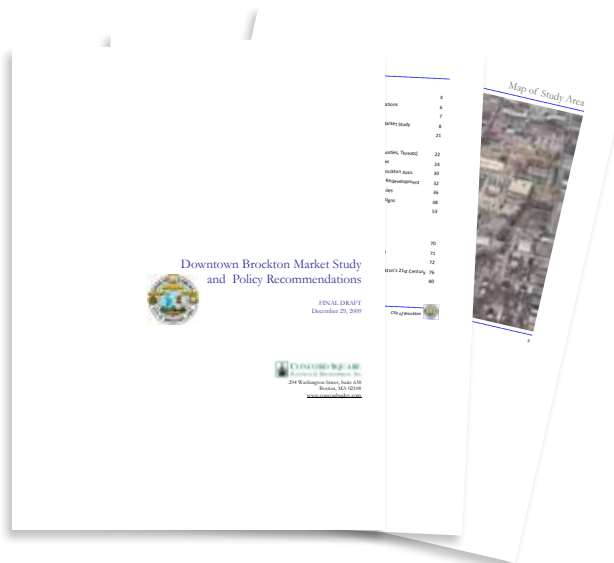
### Downtown Brockton Market Study & Policy Recommendations (2009)

The *Downtown Brockton Market Study & Policy Recommendations* analyzed trends in housing,

demographics, retail economics and resident feedback. The report offered recommendations for public policies and actions that City officials and others could pursue in an effort to encourage more private investment in downtown. The recommendations highlighted a need for coordinated policy and land use planning; appropriate and predictable regulation; public investment; and assistance in private efforts to secure development financing.

#### Policy Recommendations

- Support development within the Downtown Brockton 40R District.
- Adopt a Downtown Brockton Urban Renewal Plan.
- Pursue creation of a National Historic District.
- Create a citywide master plan.
- Continue to improve management of public parking supply.
- Establish façade improvement and business loan programs.
- Conduct an inventory of downtown businesses.
- Offer public land and buildings for redevelopment.
- Advocate for legislation to benefit Massachusetts cities.



## Zoning and Regulation Recommendations

- Modernize the zoning ordinance.
- Adopt an adaptive-reuse overlay district.
- Amend the 40R ordinance to exempt small projects from workforce housing requirements.
- Start a master planning process and re-zoning initiative for CSX property.
- Reduce the required parking ratios for retail development.
- Streamline the building permit process.

## Infrastructure Improvements

- Invest in public improvements close to and in coordination with proposed private investment.
- Make sure funding sources are available and identify new sources of funding.

## Capacity Building

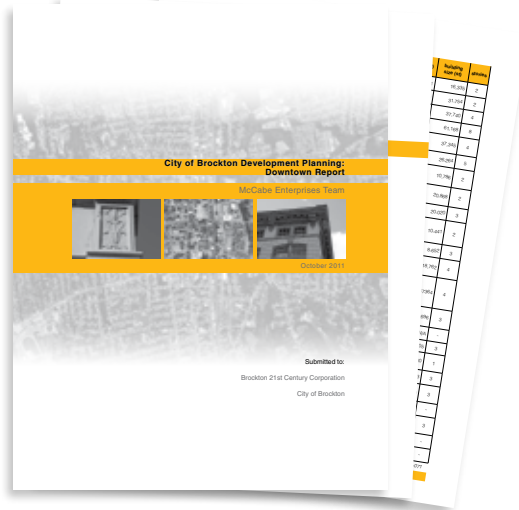
- Ensure that dedicated public safety resources are available to downtown.
- Provide dedicated staffing support to the Planning Board through a city planner.
- Empower the Redevelopment Authority with dedicated staff support.
- Develop municipal GIS capacity and invest in digitization of parcel data.
- Partner with Brockton Public Schools.

## Marketing and Outreach

- Cultivate positive relationships with local and regional media, including the *Brockton Enterprise*.
- Hold a development-financing workshop on the use of tax credits.
- Continue dialogue with area colleges and universities about potentially expanding into downtown.
- Establish and maintain an online sitefinder both locally and through state and national databases
- Work with MassDevelopment to host a developers' conference.

## City of Brockton Development Planning: Downtown Report (2011)

The *City of Brockton Development Planning: Downtown Report* primarily focused on the next steps for building a redevelopment pipeline for downtown. This report built on the 2009 Market Study and Policy recommendations, reviewing 22



potential redevelopment sites identified in that plan and suggesting three candidates on which to focus.

The report also recommended that Brockton concentrate streetscape and infrastructure improvements downtown, within a quarter-mile of the commuter rail station. These improvements include:

## Streetscape Improvements

- Make sidewalk repairs and improve pedestrian access to meet ADA/MAAB standards.
- Install green landscaped buffers along sidewalks.
- Repave/resurface roadways.
- Illuminate stone railway bridge underpasses and improve lighting in general.
- Improve signalization for safety.
- Improve hydraulic conditions and water quality and make drainage improvements.
- Develop a consistent palette of materials.
- Incorporate bike lanes into streetscape work.

### Create a network of multi-use paths for pedestrians and bicyclists.

### Enhance Salisbury and Trout brooks as amenities for downtown workers and residents.

- Extend greenways along Salisbury and Trout brooks and connect them to multi-use paths.
- Provide easy public access along both brooks.

### Strengthen and enhance connections to MBTA station and BAT terminal.

- Improve the downtown street system for transport.

### Address safety concerns.

- Improve lighting.
- Introduce a dedicated beat officer.
- Add pedestrian count-downs at crossing signals.

### Create more destinations for pedestrians.

- Encourage active ground-level active uses and a mix of uses.
- Add restaurants and cafés.

### Coordinate management and advocacy,

- Establish a business improvement district with a dedicated staff person to promote growth downtown and recruit new businesses.
- Create a downtown manager position to work on implementation, marketing, business retention, promotion, urban design issues.
- Widely publicize and market changes; get the word out.
- Take advantage of available space at reasonable rents.

### Implementation Tools

- Develop an urban revitalization plan as a long-term framework for action.
- Establish a DIF to capture some of the net increase in real estate tax revenues for investing in infrastructure improvements.
- Prepare properties for lease.

### Historic

- Use federal and historic tax credits.
- List downtown historic properties on the National Register.

### Culture

- Attract artists through the creation of live-work studio housing.
- Integrate art into the streetscape.

## Brockton Economic Development Self-Assessment Tool Report (2014)

The Economic Development Self-Assessment Tool (EDSAT) is a questionnaire that public officials can complete to assess the strengths



and weaknesses of their jurisdiction's ability to expand and sustain economic growth. Through the EDSAT process, public officials and business leaders worked as a team, assessing each of their roles in creating a business-friendly climate. The results of the assessment are summarized below.

### Recommendations

- Involve stakeholders and residents in creation of an economic development strategy.



- 
- Enhance marketing efforts in Metro South; work with local, state, and regional firms.
  - Create a procedure for reducing community opposition to developments.

## **Strengths**

### **Real Estate and Development**

- Commercial rents in downtown are 18% lower than in the median comparison group municipalities.
- Home ownership is high and home prices are relatively low.
- A list of sites available for development is accessible and well updated.
- Infrastructure has sufficient capacity to support increased use.
- An overlay district exists for fast-tracking permits for particular uses.

### **Transportation**

- Parking meets or exceeds comparable municipalities for retail, manufacturing, development sites. Rates charged in downtown are in line with Brockton's size.
- A transit-oriented development strategy exists, and the city is well-served by both public rail and bus, and shuttle services.
- Commuter rail access to Boston is very good, with three commuter rail stops in Brockton.

### **Amenities and Services**

- Business services are complementary, with a “vigorously” active Chamber of Commerce and three local business associations active in the city.
- Brockton has good access to educational, institutional, and cultural amenities, such as the Fuller Craft Museum, the Brockton Symphony Orchestra, and Massasoit Community College. Two major colleges, one university, and three vocational/technical programs operate within 10 miles of downtown.
- A well-maintained and informative website exists for newcomers.

## **Weaknesses**

### **Real Estate and Development**

- Rents in the highway business district are 49% higher than the median for comparable communities. Manufacturing rents are also high.
- Physical attractiveness is poor, with a large proportion of dilapidated housing stock, buildings requiring renovation, and vacant commercial space.
- The city lacks amenities and a good mix of uses, such as restaurants and day care facilities.
- Local split property tax rates are very high.
- Highway access is poor, with a low proportion of retail, manufacturing, or office development sites within two miles of a major highway.

### **Public Approvals and Permitting**

- Timeliness of approvals needs to be addressed; abutters slow the review process.
- There is a weak commercial/industrial attraction policy, and the City lacks an economic development strategy.
- The City has no team that reviews development proposals before official reviews.

### **Local Population**

- Workforce composition is relatively weak, with high proportions of semi-skilled workers and English language learners, as well as a low proportion of technically-skilled workers.
- Labor (available) includes small percentages of residents with high school and college degrees.
- Crime rates are higher than in comparable communities.
- Workforce training does not adequately meet demand.

### **Other**

- Cross-marketing with state agencies and organizations is lacking.

This 2015 memo summarized analysis undertaken on behalf of the Brockton 21st Century Corporation to evaluate the potential revenues that could become available through establishment of a district improvement financing (DIF) zone in downtown. DIF was adopted by state legislation in 2003 to provide a new mechanism for communities to finance public infrastructure and other expenses needed to encourage development and redevelopment.

**AG JENNINGS, LLC**

Office: 800 North 1st, 4th Floor, Suite 400, St. Cloud, MN 56301  
 Main: 800.769.3000 x 2000 or 800.769.3000

Telephone:  
 651-729-2029

Fax:  
 651-729-2029

Date: February 20, 2013

To: Gordon Car, Brockton 21st Century Corporation

From: Angus Jennings, ACF

Re: Downtown Brockton DCF Analysis, Preliminary Findings and Recommendations

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This memorandum summarizes analysis undertaken on behalf of the Brockton 21st Century Corporation to evaluate the potential revenues that could become available through the establishment of a District Improvement Financing ("DIF") District in Downtown Brockton.

Recent and ongoing private infrastructure in Downtown Brockton affords a unique, near-term opportunity to leverage that private investment to secure and optimize improvements to public infrastructure. Specifically, establishment of a DIF District offers potential benefits to secure improvements with future incremental new revenue.

DIF was adopted by State legislation in 2003 to provide a new mechanism for communities to finance public infrastructure and other expenses needed to facilitate development and redevelopment. More recently, the legislation was amended to enable to significantly streamline the process a community must follow to enact a DIF. Among other changes, the current DIF legislation no longer requires State approval, so a DIF may be enacted entirely through local adoption by the Mayor and City Council.

Based on the assumptions and methodology described in this memorandum, it is estimated that a DIF District could result in Tax Revenue of \$152k during the first year of a DIF District, which would support a bond of \$6.5M. By year 2 of the DIF, when the Tax Revenue reaches \$44k, without inflation, a bond of \$7.5M would be supportable. If inflation within the District occurs or at over the estimated time, year 2 revenues of \$492k would support a bond of \$9M.

This note is intended to assist your office and the City of Brockton in determining whether it makes sense to establish a DIF District and, if so, how best to structure such a District.

We recommended conducting a working meeting of interested parties to review the findings and recommendations in this memorandum, discuss comments for revision of assumptions and methodologies if needed, and discuss potential next steps.

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## Conclusions

# CONSISTENT THEMES IN PREVIOUS PLANS

All of the previous plans reviewed shared key themes when discussing priorities for Downtown Brockton. They also shared consistent recommendations for improving downtown's infrastructure.

## Priorities for Downtown

### **Revitalize Downtown.**

Create an Urban Renewal District consistent with the requirements of MGL 121B to facilitate development projects.



### **Improve downtown's mix of uses.**

Add more mixed uses to downtown (cafés, restaurants, other); activate the street level; and provide destinations for pedestrians.



### **Address safety concerns.**

Add a dedicated beat officer, improve lighting, and add pedestrian countdowns at crossing signals.



### **Pursue creation of a historic district.**

Register properties on the National Register and facilitate the use of federal and state historic tax credits.

### **Cross-market downtown**

Collaborate with state agencies and organizations to enhance marketing efforts and highlight improvements that attract businesses to downtown.

### **Optimize allocation of DIF revenue.**

Each plan that reviewed the Downtown Improvement Fund recommended that it be allocated in the most efficient way possible to improve downtown Brockton.

## Infrastructure Recommendations

### **Add a parking garage.**

Many of the previous plans recommended the addition of a parking structure to accommodate new development and support existing parking needs in downtown. The garage size must match existing and anticipated demand. Parking garages can be designed with a “wrap” of housing to mask their facades to accommodate future upward expansion.

### **Create more two-way traffic.**



Previous plans recommended restoring two-way traffic flow to select streets. Stakeholders identified one-way traffic in several planning

processes as a barrier to access and a cause of congestion. Plans recommended testing a two-way street network and presenting the results clearly enough to secure funding for full engineering and construction. This reconstruction can also better accommodate pedestrian and cycling uses.

### **Extend the greenways and connect them to downtown.**



Previous plans recommended extension of greenways and separated paths at Salisbury and Trout brooks. They also recommended the creation of a network

of pedestrian and bicycle lanes as amenities for residents and visitors that connect downtown with the brooks.



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## 4: Community Vision

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*As noted earlier, Brockton has completed multiple plans that focus on downtown in the past five years. To avoid duplication of efforts and “planning fatigue,” the core elements of the Action Strategy draw from and build on these earlier studies. Yet community involvement remains critical to building resident and other stakeholder support for any recommendations. So the study team worked to collect opinions and engage residents in ways that supplemented earlier work rather than duplicating it. Stakeholder focus groups and interviews provided a detailed picture of current issues, challenges, and opportunities. In fact, using both physical and online engagement, the study team collected input on existing conditions and possible new initiatives from well over 500 people.*

### BROCKTON GATEWAY TRANSFORMATIVE DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE (TDI) PARTNERSHIP

The TDI partnership consisted of a team of residents, property and business owners, representatives of institutions, and others, all of whom have a stake in downtown’s future. This group served as a sounding board for the planning team. Throughout the process, they advised the planning team; reviewed draft strategies and other documents; and served as facilitators during the public workshop. The TDI partnership will track implementation success and continue to champion the core recommendations of the Action Plan.

### STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

The planning team met with more than 100 stakeholders in focus groups that included students, employers, employees, and public officials. Participants included:

- Brockton High School students
- Downtown business owners
- DBA-B21 members
- City staff and department heads
- Representatives of cultural institutions
- Social service providers
- Real estate and development experts
- Downtown residents
- Representatives of historic preservations and arts groups
- W.B. Mason employees
- Local architects, engineers, and surveyors

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# ONLINE COMMUNITY SURVEY

For those who couldn't take part in person, the planning team created an online survey to gain additional insights and impressions of downtown. More than 400 individuals responded. The survey, which appears in the appendix, provided confirmation that most residents are very concerned about the condition of downtown and makes a strong case that focused revitalization initiatives must be a priority for our city.

## Some of the reasons survey respondents cited for visiting downtown:

*"During the day, but there's nowhere to do errands or grab a slice of pizza"*

*"I live there, SoCo Lofts."*

*"Only drive through on weekdays after work"*

*"...only for holiday events which happen on the weekend. [W]ould like to go down for dinner and entertainment if something was there!"*

*"I just do not go downtown anymore and that is a shame!"*

*"Drive through or use post office."*

*"to public transit ( i.e., to go to Boston)"*

*"I attend meetings at Brockton organizations and City Hall"*

*"Its got the potential, but there needs to be a economic model put in place to attract high-end developers"*

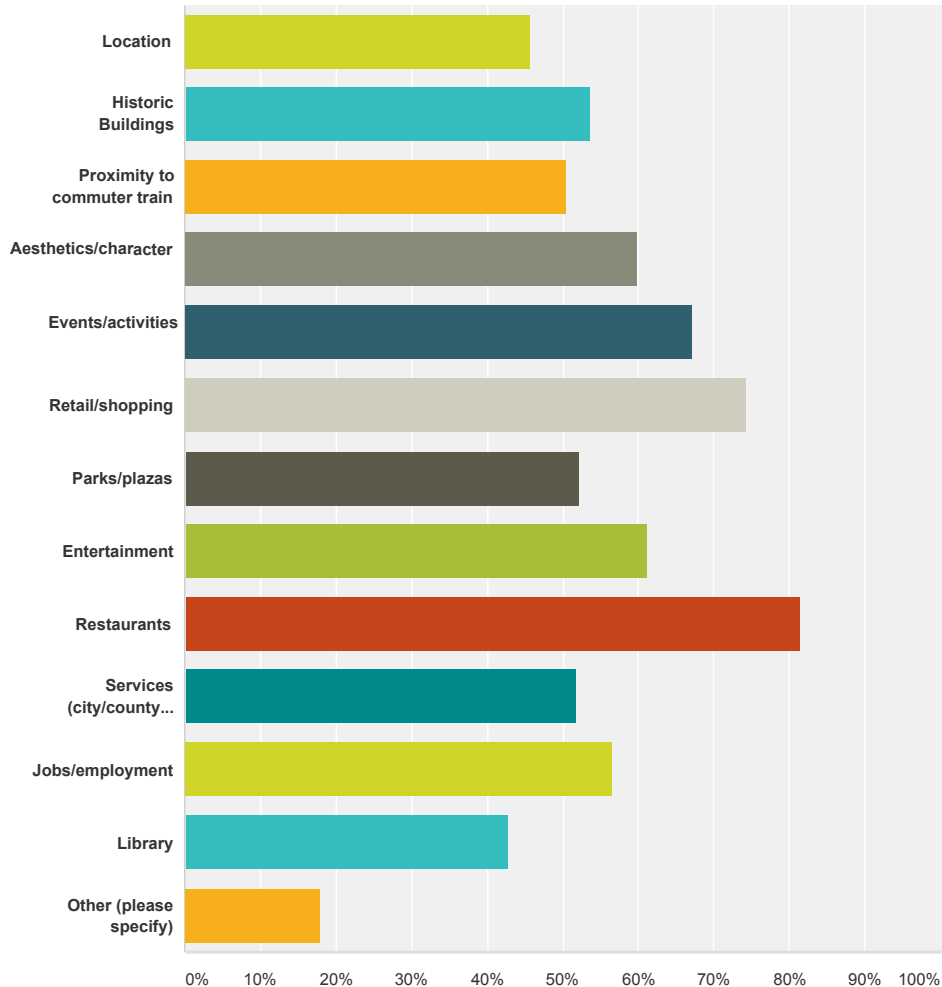
*"I used to go there 40 years ago when it was a 2-way street. Now I go around the downtown area"*

*"Work and attend a church"*

*"I pass through downtown on my way to the commuter rail station."*

## Q10 What is important to you about a successful downtown (choose all that apply)?

Answered: 350 Skipped: 54

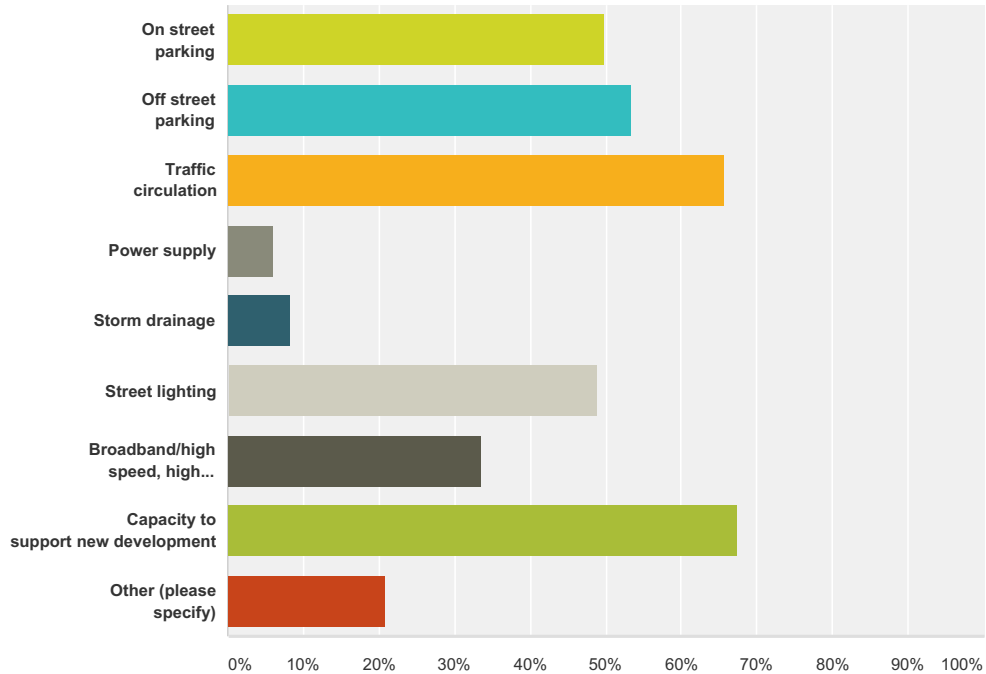


Answer Choices	Responses	
Restaurants	81.43%	285
Retail/shopping	74.29%	260
Events/activities	67.14%	235
Entertainment	61.14%	214
Aesthetics/character	60.00%	210
Jobs/employment	56.57%	181
Historic Buildings	53.71%	188
Parks/plazas	52.29%	183
Services	51.71%	198
Proximity to commuter train	50.57%	177
Location	45.71%	160
Library	42.86%	150
Other	18.00%	63



**Q11 In your opinion, what issues related to infrastructure need to be addressed or improved upon (choose all that apply)**

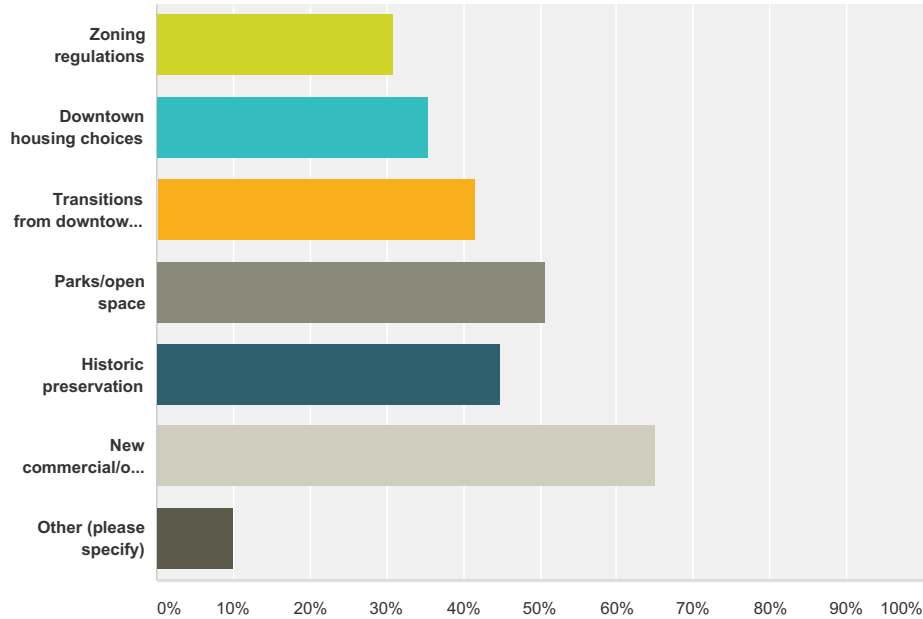
Answered: 348 Skipped: 56



Answer Choices	Responses	
Capacity to support new development	67.53%	235
Traffic circulation	65.80%	229
Off-street parking	53.45%	186
On-street parking	50.00%	174
Street lighting	48.85%	170
Broadband/high-speed, high-capacity		
Internet WiFi	33.62%	117
Other	20.98%	73
Storm drainage	8.33%	29
Power supply	6.03%	21

**Q14 In your opinion, what issues related to land use need to be addressed or improved upon (choose all that apply)?**

Answered: 339 Skipped: 65



Answer Choices	Responses	
New commercial/office/retail development	65.19%	221
Parks/open space	50.74%	172
Historic preservation	44.84%	152
Transitions from downtown into surrounding neighborhoods	41.59%	141
Downtown housing choices	35.40%	120
Zoning regulations	30.97%	105
Other (please specify)	10.03%	34

# DOWNTOWN BROCKTON PLANNING WORKSHOP

On September 30, more than 50 people took part in a planning workshop to review and provide input on the Brockton Downtown Action Strategy. The event—which took place from 6:30-8:00pm in the gallery space at 50 Centre Street—opened with a presentation of the core elements of the Action Strategy. Both individual

and collaborative exercises helped residents begin thinking about ways to refine the draft plan. To help people gain a better understanding of existing conditions, a series of posters highlighted current conditions, including land-use classifications, land values, and key demographic data on residents of the surrounding community. A poster summarizing key recommendations from previous planning efforts was also created and displayed.



*Mayor Bill Carpenter provided an introduction the Action Strategy planning effort.*



## Visioning Exercise: “What Would a Vibrant Downtown Brockton Look and Feel Like?”

**We asked residents to describe what a successful Downtown would look like to them. These were some of the most popular visions, in summary form.**

*There is a strong desire for a diverse variety of dining options, including outdoor dining, ethnic cuisine, pubs/sports restaurants. They should be family-friendly, fit for young professionals and walkable.*

*In addition to dining, downtown also needs an infusion of shops and businesses, ranging from unique boutiques and independent retail shops to urban necessities like grocery stores, drug stores and hardware stores.*

*Downtown resoundingly needs a variety of arts and entertainment including music, theatre, art, dancing, festivals, live music, trivia night, films and art shows.*

*The town center should feel safe, vibrant and inviting. Downtown should be a clean, well maintained and well-lit environment for locals and visitors.*

*Green space is very important. Some ideas include park benches and tables with shade trees; gardens; a playground and/or fountain for children; pocket parks; walking paths.*

*Downtown should be easily accessible for people from surrounding communities and include more parking as well as public transportation and bike lanes/bike parking.*

*Affordable housing, mixed-use residential development should be integrated into a walkable downtown district.*

*Define and promote the city's rich history by integrating the city's history into its new urban identity.*

**We asked residents to write a description of what a revitalized downtown would look like in five to ten years. These were some of the dozens of wonderful responses.**

*“A place I can escape to, walk around, enjoy the landscape, hear music, see all types of artists and performances, enjoy a snack or a meal and feel safe at all times. I would like to be able to sit outside and have friendly talks with others, have an area for children to play and tables and seats for people to talk or play chess.”*

*“Be clean; be well kept; be fun’ be vibrant; be lively; be a meeting place; be the place to go for dinner; be the place to see a band; be friendly; be a neighborhood; be proud; be beautiful.”*

*“Make me want to bring my family to events with a sense of security. I would like to frequent restaurants in a vibrant urban setting while feeling proud that I live here. I would like to spend my disposable income at the local businesses in the community where I pay my taxes.”*

## Strengths and Challenges

We asked residents to think about downtown today and list its strengths and challenges. These were the most frequent responses.

Strengths	Challenges
Diversity of people	One-way streets
Train/public transportation	Poor lighting
Character of buildings, architecture, history	Few positive places for youth
Good public education	Homelessness, drugs, loitering
Strong health care facilities	No “destination spots” or restaurants
Affordable home ownership	Vacant and/or distressed buildings
Strong community engagement	Not enough public parking
City Hall Plaza	Safety
	Roadway conditions
	Poor signage

## Tabletop Exercise

We divided participants into small groups and asked them to discuss their top five priorities for downtown. Each table had a map of the study area and colored stickers for use in marking and annotating the map. Green stickers represented places people liked, blue stickers represented places where something new should go, yellow stickers showed where the first redevelopment should start, and black lines showed group members’ typical routes in and through downtown. The maps appear in the appendix.

Top priorities expressed during this exercise included:

- More shops and dining
- Free on-street parking, more parking
- Address homelessness and loitering
- Increase small business opportunities
- Fast-track/simplified permitting
- Safety
- Need entertainment
- Walkability
- Green space
- New fire / police stations
- Revitalized Frederick Douglass Avenue
- Clean and well-maintained public spaces

## Planning Workshop, September 30, 2015





# EXPANDED PLANNING EFFORTS

Although this Action Strategy identifies initiatives located in the Urban Revitalization District, redevelopment opportunities exist throughout the study area.

## 1. CSX District

The City should initiate a master planning program for the 55 acres around the vacant CSX freight yard east of the main line between Eliot, Court and North Cary streets. The railroad has declared the 31.27-acre parcel surplus, making it one of the largest private undeveloped parcels in Brockton. The plan must balance future land



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use, zoning, and infrastructure needs against financing and economic constraints. Its proximity to public transit makes the CSX site a prime candidate for creation of a “one-stop” homeless center and as a possible a future site for the city’s main police and fire stations.

## **2. Downtown North**

This area is bound by the railroad tracks on the east, Linden and Spring streets on the north, and Pleasant/Court streets on the south. With Perkins Park at its center, the district is bisected by both North Main and North Montello streets. This neighborhood has a direct impact on the success of the downtown core, and it holds considerable opportunity, given its access to transit.

## **3. Legion Parkway/Warren/Vicente’s**

A natural extension of the important Centre Street corridor, Legion Parkway would benefit from additional planning and redevelopment. The east end of the parkway has strong ties to Main Street, and the center is dotted with historic structures, but the western end at Warren Avenue becomes a no man’s land of auto-oriented businesses with little connection to the surrounding area. Redeveloping key parcels on Warren Avenue would restore the connection between the neighborhood to the west and the larger community. Opportunities for the city to explore in this area include a pocket park and tot lot playground.

## **4. “Judiciary Square”**

The area bounded by West Elm Street, Main Street, Belmont Street and Warren Avenue needs a redevelopment plan. Already home to Brockton District Trial Court and Plymouth Probate and Family Court, the district could become home to a new Superior Courthouse to replace the 125-year-old facility at 72 Belmont Street. Additionally, the redevelopment of this area could make room for an expansion of the Boys & Girls Club and Community Recreation Center.

## **5. Downtown South**

The land south of downtown and north of the Salisbury Plain Brook contains many of Brockton’s cultural assets, including the main library, the YMCA, Council on Aging, and the School Department headquarters. The relocation of the Plymouth County District Attorney’s office from its current location and disposition of the building at 32 Belmont Street should serve as the catalyst for a larger redevelopment plan. Such a plan should encourage more intense development along Main Street and enhance the unique public space created by the Sycamore Grove at the former BAT terminal. A planning study of the area could address YMCA expansion needs, identify additional sites for new cultural amenities, and set the stage for creation of a new downtown neighborhood around the park.

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# 5: Strategic Action Plan

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*This chapter presents core action strategies that will directly contribute to creating a socially and economically thriving neighborhood downtown. These strategies reflect the desires expressed by community members, an analysis of existing conditions, and efforts that have succeeded in communities similar to Brockton around the country.*

## FOCUSING ON MARKET REALITIES

The action strategies in this chapter and the development concepts in Chapter 6 both reflect what is economically feasible in Brockton. The planning process began with an analysis of market trends, the results of which helped shape these recommendations. This allowed the City, planners, designers and community members to explore the costs, benefits and trade-offs of different approaches. Focusing on market feasibility also helped jump-start development of strategies for implementing the plan. It allowed the study team to identify tools and key stakeholders needed to make the plan a reality. It also enabled the study team to address the complex issues of sequencing development and funding sources as they were creating a vision for downtown. For all these reasons, the Action Strategy operates as much like a business plan as a master plan.

## CORE ACTION STRATEGIES

### ***Increase residential density downtown.***

*These action steps can encourage more residential development downtown.*

### **Amend and expand 40R Smart Growth Zoning.**

Leverage the 40R Smart Growth Zoning districts to encourage residential development downtown.

### **Actively market development sites.**

Pursue developers to invest in Brockton's strategic redevelopment sites.

### **Release purpose-driven requests for proposals.**

Include city goals in RFPs so that site-redevelopment plans help the city achieve its goals.



## **Re-establish the feel of a vibrant downtown.**

*These action steps can bring vitality back to the streets of Brockton.*

### **Allow outdoor dining.**

Outdoor eating areas are an important part of a vibrant streetscape. They provide opportunities for people to spend more time in the public realm (rather than just passing through it), creating an atmosphere that attracts more people and putting more “eyes on the street,” to increase safety. Changing codes and practices—which currently forbid outdoor dining anywhere downtown—will allow existing businesses and new establishments to pursue multiple options, including rooftop dining, café patios, food trucks, and sidewalk dining for restaurants.



### **Improve streetscapes.**

More appealing streetscapes and sidewalks will encourage people to walk in downtown. Potential improvements include new paving materials, sidewalk amenities like seating and planters, bump-outs on street corners and street trees. The City should develop standards for adding bioswales to sidewalks, with the aim of giving developers guidance and introducing these facilities itself when it rebuilds streets. The guidelines can accommodate two goals: creating more attractive streets and reducing stormwater runoff to area lakes and rivers.



### **Create one or two connected walking streets.**

Focusing on two connected thoroughfares as an initial goal will begin to create a network of pedestrian access downtown. This network can then expand as new redevelopment occurs.

### **Restore historic buildings/create a historic district.**

New development can include the rehabilitation of historic buildings. Updated uses that take place within an historic exterior can enhance activity in downtown while showcasing Brockton’s valuable historic character. Examples of rehabilitated buildings include conversions of old mills into condominiums and office spaces—a strategy that has met wide success in Providence, New Bedford, Lawrence, Lowell, Northampton, and North Adams—among others.

### **Fill in “missing teeth” and replace buildings that detract.**

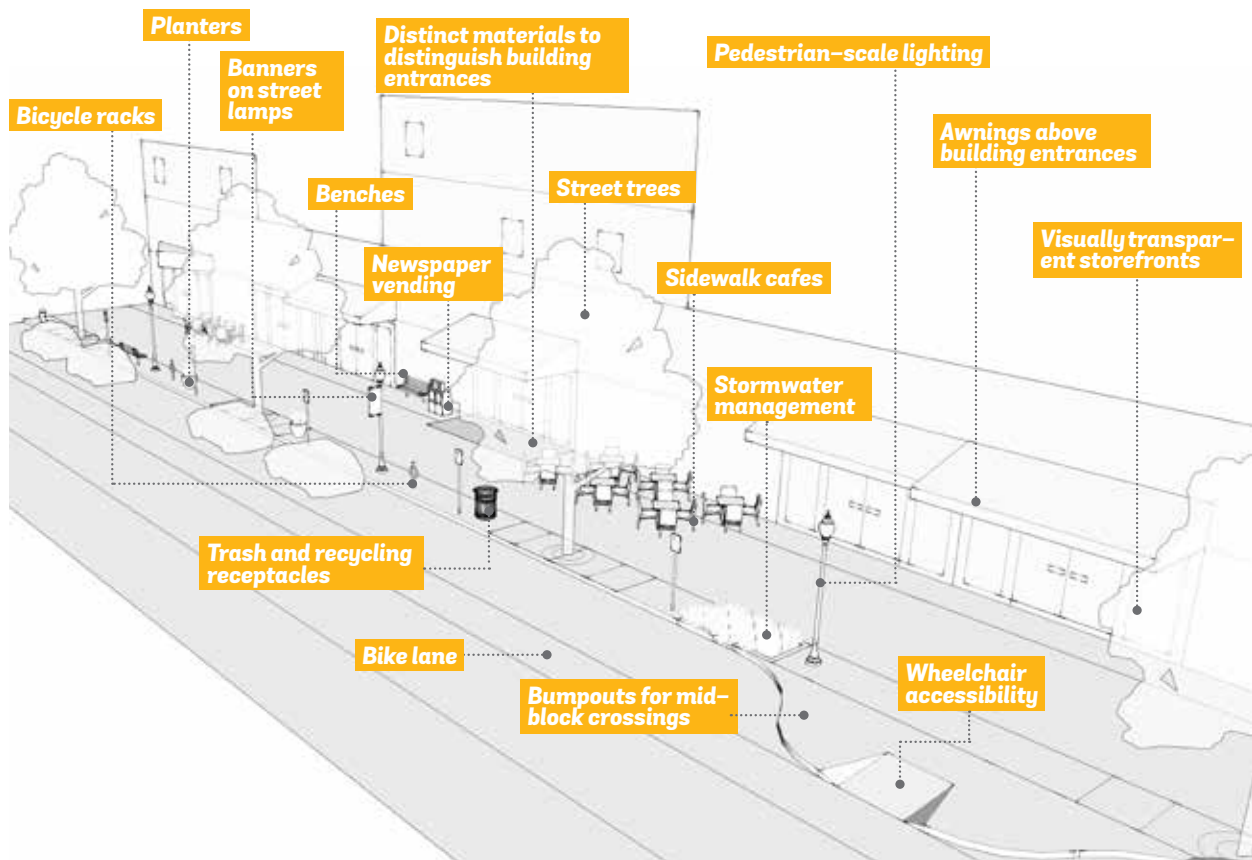
While many buildings merit preservation, others detract from the character of downtown and should be replaced with new development. In addition, vacant lots and surface parking represent opportunities for infill development that can knit together nodes of activity throughout downtown.

### Create a connected, inviting public realm.

A well-designed public realm attracts people and makes them want to linger. Great sidewalks don't just move people; they promote strolling, dining, people-watching, and bumping into friends and colleagues. They can also knit together an integrated system of public spaces, such as the plaza at City Hall, new public space within the Enterprise Block, and new destinations proposed in this Action Strategy.

Woven into this system are places for people who want to ride a bike, walk a dog, sit and talk with friends, or enjoy the setting in just about any way imaginable. Restaurants can and should open up to the sidewalk with windows and retractable walls. Design also means accounting for human comfort in every season, with an emphasis on shade in the summer and heat in the spring and fall to extend the outdoor environment.

Many elements make up a successful pedestrian streetscape, including (but not limited to) those shown below. Sidewalks should include space for buildings to extend storefronts, stoops and architectural features; unobstructed pedestrian passage and space for landscaping, street trees and furnishings such as bike racks, streetlights, fire hydrants, and benches. Building entrances should be somewhere between 30' and 80' apart to allow for short walking distances between them. Street trees should be spaced approximately 30' apart, depending on the size of the tree, and should have adequate root zone beneath pavement to grow healthy and tall. Bumpouts, parklets and pedestrian-scale lighting help create pedestrian-friendly environments.



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### **Provide structured parking to support new and denser development.**

In order to achieve a level of development that fully activates sidewalks and streets, downtown can't rely on surface parking; it will eat up valuable development sites close to the train station that are the key to successful revival. That means downtown will need a parking garage—and, in fact, the plan for a full build-out of the Enterprise Block already includes one. Without careful façade design, however, a garage can create a dead zone along the street, with long, blank stretches that can feel unwelcoming and unsafe, particularly at night. The façade of the planned garage (and any future garage) must feature multiple elements that support a vibrant street environment. These include high-quality materials, green walls, banners or artwork, and creative lighting.



### **Continue to improve public safety.**

*Residents, businesses, workers and other stakeholders called public safety their top concern about downtown. Even as crime declines with downtown's improving condition, steps can be taken to ensure people's safety and reduce the perception of danger.*

### **Increase the visibility of public safety efforts with foot and/or bike patrols.**

The visibility of foot or bicycle patrols can reduce the likelihood of crime and increase perceptions of safety.



### **Create a corps of Clean, Green, and Safe Ambassadors.**

These ambassadors will create additional “eyes on the streets;” discourage inappropriate behavior; remove litter; and maintain planters and hanging flower baskets. This program offers an effective and relatively affordable way to improve dramatically the perception of downtown safety. The program should start by summer of 2016.

### **Add more and better lighting.**

Street lighting and lighting of building façades, particularly around entrances, help build a greater sense of security.





### **Develop and install a coordinated system of directional signs.**

Clear signage and wayfinding helps visitors avoid getting lost downtown.

### **Re-establish the homelessness task force.**

Residents, workers, and business owners who took part in the planning process consistently highlighted the issue of homelessness downtown. Their concerns ranged from the welfare of homeless people to a sense of threat they or others felt from the behavior of homeless people. The City should take the lead in advocating for policies and recommendations that embody a regional “housing first” approach to homelessness.

### **Improve services for homeless community.**

Father Bill's & MainSpring have expressed interest in working with the City to improve support for some of Brockton's neediest residents. This would complement a homelessness task force that focuses on “housing first” policies. The City should invite other organizations that assist with homelessness to join the task force, and ask the group to devise a comprehensive set of policies for the City to adopt.

The task force should weigh the potential costs and benefits of building a new consolidated emergency shelter and day services program on a site off Main Street. Assuming the task force recommends this approach, the City should work to support its development.

Specific items to address include:

- Identifying building, land, design, and program needs and costs for a consolidated facility. The task force should consider such issues as:
  - > *access to transportation*
  - > *number of beds*
  - > *outdoor areas*
  - > *kitchen and dining areas*
  - > *recreation and green space*
  - > *program space for services, health care, and collaborating organizations*
  - > *organizational and management capacity*
  - > *construction and operating costs*
- Identifying locations that do not create adverse impacts for existing neighborhoods.
- Exploring potential funding sources that can support shelters.

### **Create and enforce quality-of-life measures.**

Reduce panhandling and pursue low-cost measures to resolve the lack of public restrooms downtown.





## How does education support downtown redevelopment?

The connection between efforts to create more educational pathways for Brockton's residents and the physical revival of downtown might not seem obvious, yet there is a link. The Collaborative's work can make a significant impact on efforts to keep existing businesses in downtown and add new ones. In 2014 the City took part in the EDSAT (Economic Development Self-Assessment Tool) program with the Dukakis Center for Urban and Regional Policy at Northeastern University. The assessment identified two "deal-breakers" or weaknesses among important factors business weigh when choosing where to locate: workforce composition and labor availability. It found that "Brockton's workforce is relatively weaker [than the workforce in comparison communities]. It has high proportions of semi-skilled workers and English language learners as well as a low proportion of technically-skilled workers." Further, "Brockton has relatively small percentages of residents with high school and college degrees." By attacking these problems, the Collaborative can improve the factors that persuade businesses to stay in or move into downtown.

## Continue efforts to create a Downtown Brockton Higher Educational Collaborative.

Brockton is looking for innovative approaches to retaining local businesses and helping them grow and to preparing residents for 21st-century jobs. To compete in the global economy, the city has to invest in a diverse and high-quality workforce. Over several years, organizations have advanced the idea of a collaborative approach to community education.

*The Collaborative has developed and committed to an economic-development strategy rooted in workforce investment and education. Led by Bridgewater State University, UMass Boston and Massasoit Community College, it also includes the City, Brockton Public Schools, Southeastern Regional Vocational Technical High School, and the Brockton Area Workforce Board. The Collaborative intends to provide a seamless and supportive environment for high school completion; English for non-native speakers; educational certification; credentialing; targeted workforce-skills training; and associate, baccalaureate, and post-baccalaureate degree programs. The Collaborative shall be achieved through both programmatic and physical improvements with a particular focus on downtown.*

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## **Provide amenities for residents, employees, and visitors.**

*Focusing on amenities helps to attract new residents and visitors and retain current downtown residents. Access to a variety of amenities is a crucial component of the demand for walkable, urban environments that will drive redevelopment. Amenities include physical buildings, establishments and infrastructure improvements as well as cultural events and programming.*

### **Group two or three restaurants in the heart of downtown.**

Clustering restaurants within walking distance of each other helps to create a core of vibrancy. These restaurants should be connected with enhanced streetscapes in order to encourage pedestrian activity and create a sense of neighborhood identity between them.



### **Locate a pharmacy directly adjacent to the core walking streets.**

Pharmacies make strong and effective anchors for mixed-use neighborhoods. The Action Plan recommends siting a pharmacy at Pleasant and Montello streets, a short walk from main downtown areas and planned housing. This location adds an important walking destination, but, because the store sits on the edge of walkable areas, it can also include parking and a drive-through window so that it can attract

a larger customer base. Design guidelines will place the building along the sidewalk and the parking behind the store so that it contributes to a walkable pedestrian environment.

### **Ensure safe walking connection to Vicente's.**

Enhancements of downtown infrastructure should include walkable connections to existing amenities, including Vicente's Supermarket. Improvements should link new activity to existing assets.

### **Increase programming to "get people on the streets."**

Regular social and cultural events are a crucial part of a thriving urban community. Temporary events and programming can also attract new visitors and existing residents to downtown without the investment required by new development. Examples of programming to pursue include:

- Maintain/expand the farmers market
- Host more festivals
- Expand the roster of music and cultural events
- Open exhibits from the Fuller Craft Museum
- Allow pop-up galleries
- Allow and encourage food trucks

### **Strategically improve the pedestrian environment.**

Create pedestrian-oriented redevelopment at the west end of Legion Parkway along Warren Avenue, improve safety on Green Street, and improve walkability in other areas around redevelopment sites.





## **Promote diversity of community.**

Diversity is essential to Brockton's identity. A diverse group of residents and visitors brings a variety of businesses, events and activities to the area. New residents seeking walkable, urban environments often cite the diversity of a neighborhood as a draw.

## **Build on the strength of Brockton's ethnic communities.**

Brockton has one of the largest communities of Cape Verdean ancestry in the country, and communities of Haitian, Angolan and many other ethnic groups live in and near downtown.

## **Create shared events attractive to a broader community.**

Cultural events that are public can be promoted citywide and regionally to attract visitors downtown and build connections among cultural groups. The popular annual Christmas Parade can serve as a model for other events that attract a wide audience.

## **Improve housing options, both downtown and across the city.**

Providing a variety of housing options to people of all means can help prevent the disproportionate displacement of some racial and ethnic groups over others.



## **Encourage entertainment and cultural venues to locate downtown.**

Entertainment destinations bring visitors, who in turn create demand for other businesses, like restaurants, coffee shops, and stores. Brockton's cultural venues have historically set up shop outside of downtown, but new or relocated venues would bring new life to the urban core. A smaller venue could host local and regional music groups, while a larger venue could become a shared space for the Brockton Symphony Orchestra and other cultural groups.

## **Consider establishing a cultural and entertainment facilities task force.**

This group could identify sites and venues for cultural programming, including a new performance center for the Brockton Symphony and other cultural organizations.

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### Support the conversion of unused second- and third-floor spaces into performance facilities.

Unused building space can be reprogrammed to host events and performances. Conversion of vacant building space for this purpose can often be done creatively and inexpensively.

### Encourage local restaurants and clubs to include live music.

Live music can draw more visitors to restaurants and clubs and help establish downtown as a cultural destination.

## Actively target new small businesses and entrepreneurs.

*Small businesses bring life to downtowns by providing varied shopping and employment options to residents and visitors.*

### Encourage breweries/tap rooms/small-batch distilleries.

**Breweries and distilleries** can act as an important regional (or national) draw for visitors. Portsmouth, NH, and Portland, ME, have parlayed clusters of microbreweries into significant tourism destinations. Current zoning allows for this use in Brockton.

### Encourage establishment of a co-working space.

**Co-working spaces** let entrepreneurs and freelancers rent desk space and shared facilities (such as conference rooms, copiers, and phones) in a professional setting. Co-working spaces like Boston's Workbar (with branches in Cohasset, New Bedford, and Providence) represent a cost-effective early step for start-ups or freelancers looking to expand from a solo practice into a larger business. The Action Strategy recommends creation of a co-working space on the second floor of the building designated to house the restaurant incubator, described below).

### Encourage establishment of a maker space.

**Maker spaces** like Providence's Steel Yard combine workshop-like spaces and fabricating machinery shared by individuals or groups of "makers." Users include start-up businesses working on prototypes or artisans making art or goods for direct sale. Some maker spaces also sponsor classes to teach skills and the use of equipment like 3D printers and laser cutters

A successful effort to establish a maker space would need to move through at least three stages. In the first stage it would work to build a community of makers with hack-a-thons and other events designed to draw potential users from Brockton and beyond. A second stage would focus on demonstrating the presence of a critical mass of potential users willing to pay at least a moderate amount for space and access to specialized equipment. This stage would also identify an organization to host or operate the space and an entrepreneur or "champion" to spearhead the effort. As market demand became clearer after the first two stages, the third stage would entail developing a business plan, seeking funding from public and private sources, and beginning implementation.

### Establish a restaurant incubator and food-business accelerator.

Restaurants rank high among the things people love about a community, but almost two-thirds of them fail by their third year of operation.

**Incubators** help entrepreneurs start restaurants in low-cost space that allows the owners to focus on concept, refine menus, and develop a feel for the market—without a big upfront investment. Often guided by in-house technical advice, they learn the management skills they'll need to succeed after graduating from the program. An **accelerator** offers access to a commercial kitchen, rentable by the hour, to small food entrepreneurs. These businesses, often run out of a home kitchen, can use the accelerator space to increase their production volume and network with other food

businesses. Accelerators often provide access to experienced advisors in the food industry as well. As entrepreneurs learn market preferences and amass capital from working on a larger scale, they can set their sights on even larger operations that may focus on catering, sales to specialty stores, or their own direct sales. As these businesses grow, they often create new jobs.

The first step in getting an incubator/accelerator off the ground would be to conduct a review of similar programs to determine what combination of features, programming, and funding sources would work best for Brockton. Running this incubator will require an expert with a specific

set of skills. The City, or an organization established to develop the incubator, will need to conduct a search for a talented individual with experience in this area to run the incubator. The City has begun preparing an application to the state's Urban Agenda Grant program with aim of winning funding to help support establishment of an incubator and accelerator.

The City has identified a building on Frederick Douglass Avenue to house the incubator. Ideally, a coworking space would occupy its second floor, but if the building proves unsuitable for this use, the co-working space should be located in another part of the study area.



## Ministry of Food

Founded by celebrity chef Jamie Oliver, Ministry of Food has downtown storefronts in four cities in England and one in Australia (where it extends its reach with food trucks and pop-up stores). MoF aims to show people with limited kitchen skills or limited time that cooking simple dishes from scratch, rather than eating takeout, yields tastier, healthier, and cheaper meals. The program blends this emphasis on healthier eating with vocational training, often backed by local foundations and colleges, and education designed to empower low-income people. On top of other benefits, Ministry of Food storefronts add new activity downtown with classes and special events.



## The Hall SF

Created to enliven a dilapidated stretch of San Francisco's Market Street (by a developer who plans to build housing on the site in about five years), The Hall SF includes six restaurant spaces and a common eating area where customers share communal tables. Operators typically spend six months in residence testing menus and dining concepts. Recent immigrants cooking the foods of home and food truck operators are some of the aspiring restaurateurs who use a residency at The Hall as an interim step toward opening a storefront. The Hall adds to its bottom line by renting the venue for large events and sponsoring musical nights that help the restaurants by drawing more customers.



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### Create “pop-up” retail spaces for artists/ local craftsmen to showcase/sell artwork.

**Short-term “pop-up” spaces** get small-scale retailers, artists and craftspeople into the larger market without their having to take on a long-term lease. These sellers enliven the space they occupy, bringing shoppers and activities to areas that might otherwise remain vacant in the absence of long-term tenants.

### Provide small business consulting to current tenants and restaurant operators.

**Supportive services** can help keep existing businesses open and thriving as activity in downtown Brockton expands.

## Improve connectivity.

### Return two-way traffic patterns on Main and Warren streets.

Transportation consultant BSC has begun an analysis of the downtown street network. It will determine the feasibility of redesigning one-way streets to accommodate two-way traffic, a change that could increase automobile access, reduce congestion, and encourage more drivers to visit the area.

### Develop a wayfinding strategy.

Participants in the planning process almost universally cited the difficulty of navigating downtown. A coordinated network of thematic signs and maps can help improve navigation. A full-scale wayfinding system would require time and impose costs, both for planning and implementation. Nevertheless, the City should give this initiative high priority. Informal strategies—such as well-designed pop-up signs highlighting new attractions—offer a low-cost and unique way of drawing attention to new amenities and encouraging people to visit new locations.

### Increase reverse-commute service on the MBTA line.

Negotiations with the MBTA on increasing the number of reverse-commute trains should continue. This would significantly increase the attractiveness for downtown as a place to locate businesses.

### Maintain or enhance current levels of BAT service.



### Add bicycle amenities.

Bicycle parking and other bicycle amenities should be incorporated into new development including housing and parking garages. The City should work with OCPC to develop a city-wide bicycle master plan to identify bicycle routes, roadway improvements, and other bicycle amenities to promote safe bicycling as a mode of transportation.



### Improve the physical environment from major downtown entry points.

The stakeholder process unearthed widespread concern about the condition of the roads and adjacent businesses along major gateway streets (Crescent, Belmont, and West Elm). The City should rank these “Gateway Streets” in terms of condition and give them priority for street repair. The proposed wayfinding strategy should identify



measures such as banners, public art, or other visual strategies to improve the experience of arriving downtown.

## Upgrade and improve infrastructure.

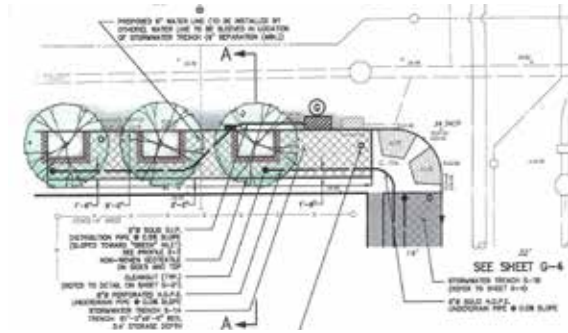
*In addition to streetscape improvements, infrastructure and utility upgrades would help make downtown more attractive to new residents.*

### Assure easy access to the OpenCape network, and promote its availability heavily.

OpenCape, the high-speed fiber-optic network for Southeastern Massachusetts, runs directly through downtown. This state-of-the-art network has great potential to change economic dynamics for Brockton and nearby communities. Chattanooga, Tennessee—not much larger than Brockton—has parlayed high-speed Internet service into a major relocation incentive for new residents and new businesses. Brockton should understand the powerful draw of high-speed Web access and publicize this advantage as a way of attracting new businesses to downtown.

### Identify and upgrade electrical and other infrastructure within downtown.

Brockton was one of the first US cities to build an electrical power station—actually under the supervision of Thomas Edison. That distinction also hints at the electrical network’s age and limited capacity to meet modern business needs.



The City should coordinate system upgrades with the first-phase projects described in Section 6.

### Establish green stormwater and sustainable infrastructure standards for new development.

Green stormwater infrastructure (GSI) is a critical aspect of a sustainable drainage system. GSI is a proven flood-prevention strategy that improves water quality and provides community benefits like green space, higher property values and increased pedestrian and bicycle safety. Develop new municipal policies to encourage the use of green infrastructure (bioswales, green rooftops, pervious pavements and more) in handling stormwater. Start with the EPA’s and Sustainable Cities Institutes’s best practices as models and look at other cities’ Green Streets Initiatives, then adapt them to Brockton’s needs.

### Plan for future police and fire facilities and the disposition of existing facilities.

The city will conduct a municipal facilities assessment and master plan in 2016. Among other things, it will quantify the space and staffing needs for the police and fire services. This assessment seems likely to recommend replacement of the fire station at 42 Pleasant Street (131 years old); the fire-alarm building at 52 Pleasant (93 years old); and police headquarters at 7 Commercial Street (48 years old). A new police and central fire station would allow the city to offer the existing properties for redevelopment. The historic fire station and fire-alarm building would lend themselves to rehabilitation, with ground-floor retail or a



restaurant and housing above. The former police headquarters would be razed to make way for large-scale mixed-use/residential development.

## **Market downtown.**

### **Provide information to new residents and visitors.**

An *Insider's Guide* can take the form of a mobile phone app, website and/or printed guide that helps visitors identify destinations like restaurants, stores, and entertainment venues. Detroit's *Insider's Guide* offers an example of how an app can become a "one-stop shop for everything in downtown."

### **Provide developer marketing/incentives/fact sheet package.**

Assemble a package of marketing materials, descriptions of development incentives, and downtown Brockton facts, and make them available to all potential developers.

### **Actively "sell" downtown to local, regional and statewide developers.**

Seek out potential developers that are currently active in Brockton, neighboring communities, and the region. Providence's I-195 District Commission has developed The Link, a sophisticated marketing campaign for vacant downtown parcels. It could provide a model for the kinds of information to provide and ways to present it.

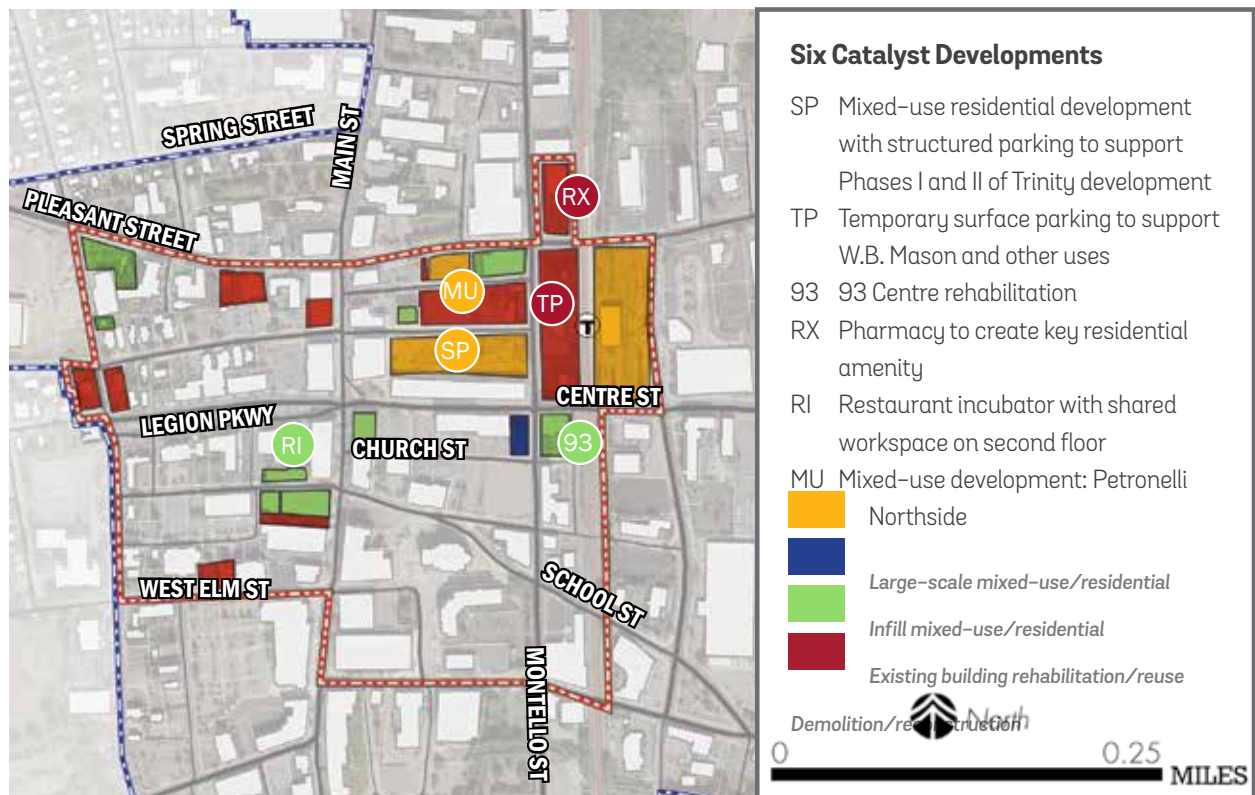
### **Initiate a downtown marketing campaign.**

A marketing and branding campaign for downtown can help attract visitors and demonstrate to residents, visitors and potential developers that downtown is growing.



## 6: Phased Redevelopment

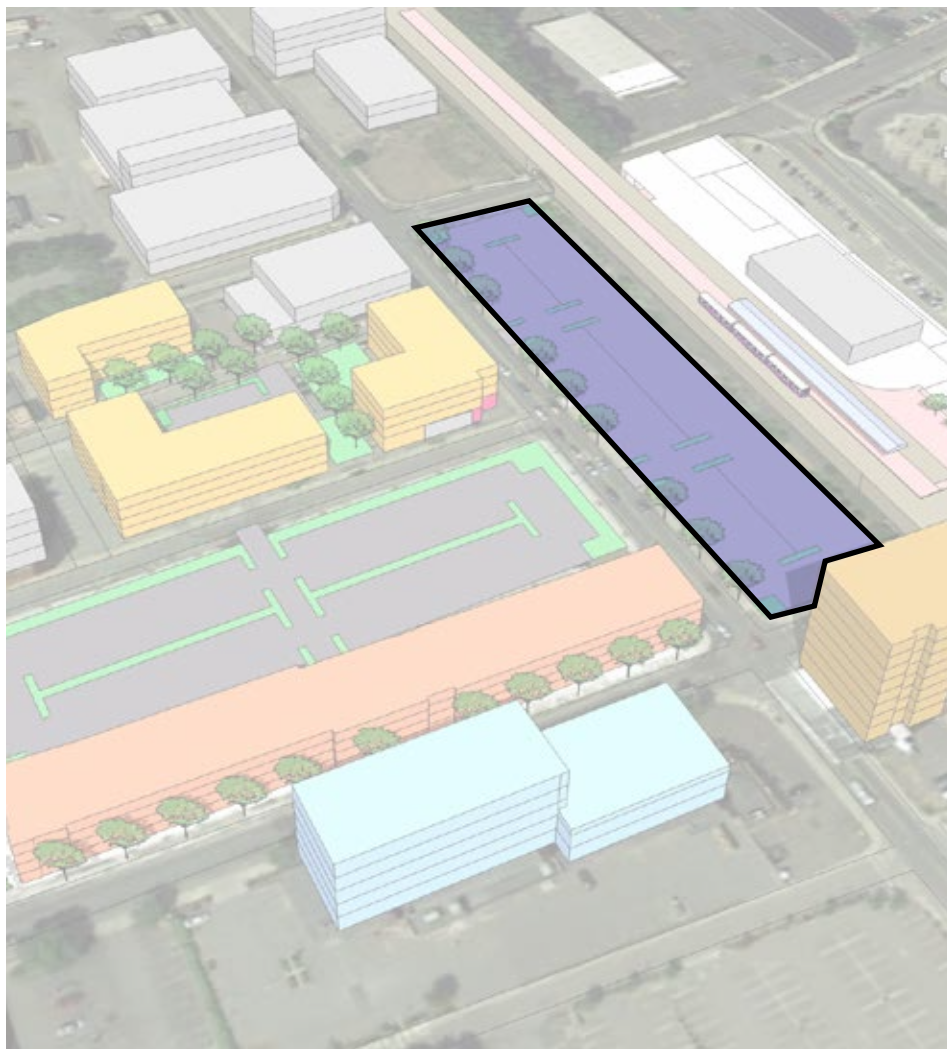
*The Action Strategy lays out a 10-year redevelopment plan. But creating a sense of momentum often holds the key to assuring successful implementation. To help Brockton build a sense of momentum in downtown, the study team identified six catalytic projects that, taken together, would help build a strong sense of action and success. In each case, the analysis includes preliminary development pro formas and other economic analyses so that Brockton can have the appropriate tools in hand to attract developer interest.*





## Temporary surface parking to support existing and new uses

Residential, retail and commercial entities all rely on parking. As new development transforms some existing parking lots, the major development initiatives in this plan, along with those launched by W.B. Mason and others, will require a temporary parking solution. Within 10 years, the plan calls for redeveloping the Montello/rail block into a new mixed-use development that includes additional structured parking.



### Development Economics

**Surface parking spaces**

**200**

**Estimated cost (demolition and development)**

**\$1,000,000**

**Potential financing mechanism: MassWorks, DIF**

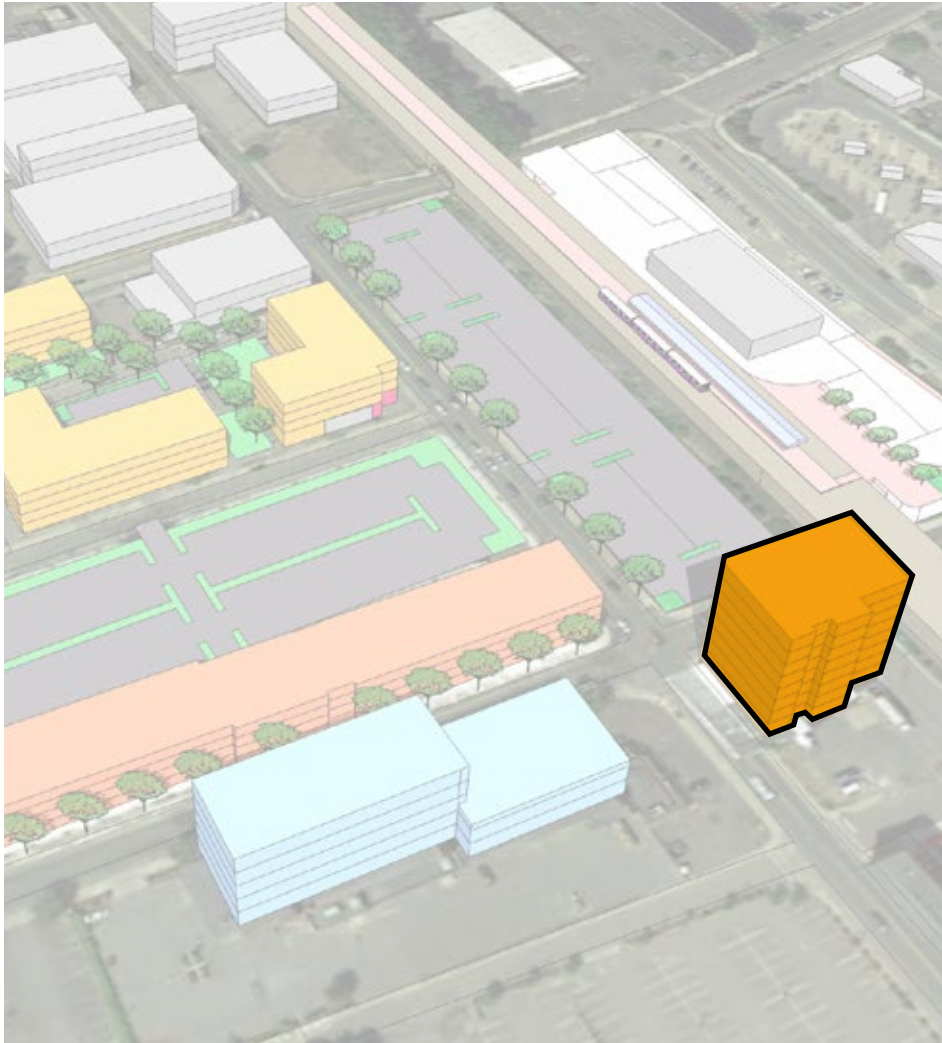
Temporary surface parking here and throughout the study area will remain in place for several years. To support the longer-range vision of more activity in downtown, temporary lots should feature a well-designed pedestrian edge with distinctive paving, fencing, and plantings. Where possible, surface lots should incorporate street trees and landscaped islands within the parking field. Where feasible, plan landscaping to allow the retention of street trees and perimeter trees when a lot eventually undergoes redevelopment. This site becomes available for mixed-use redevelopment after the first series of catalytic projects are complete.



# 93

## Rehabilitation of 93 Centre

The building at 93 Centre Street is emblematic of Brockton's collection of important historic buildings. Rehabilitation of this building will add to the vibrancy of a revitalized Centre Street.



### Development Economics

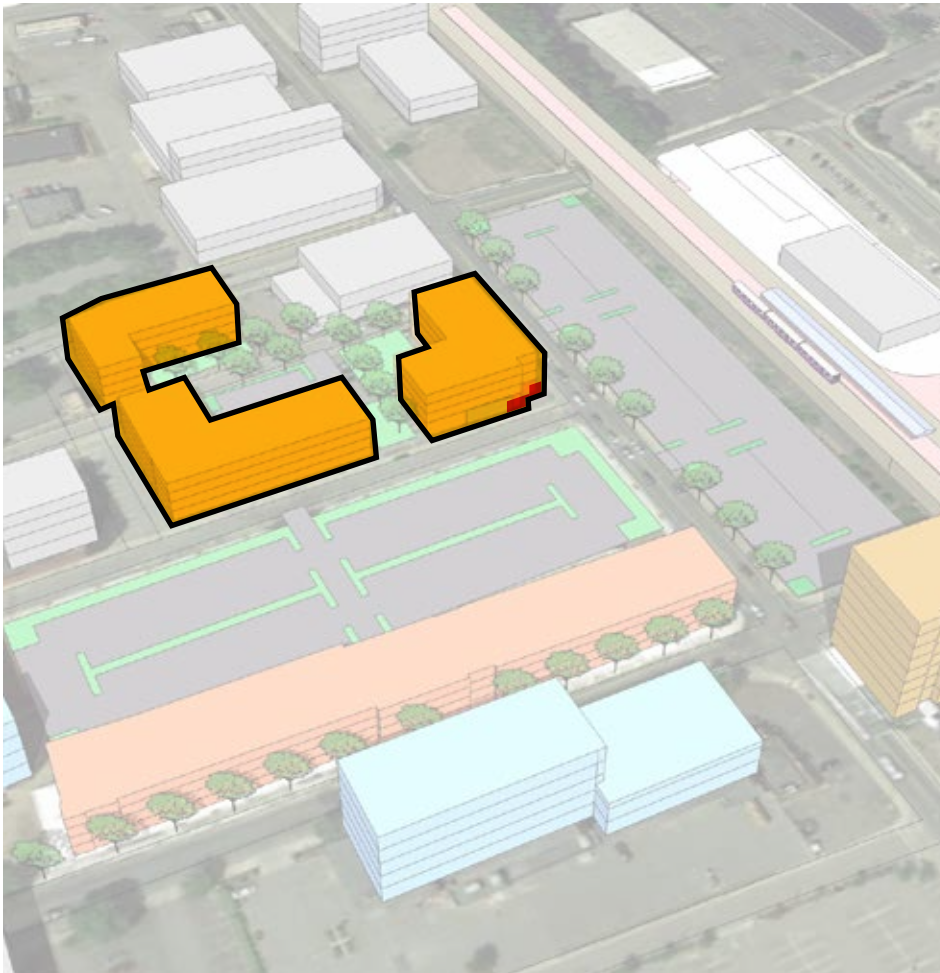
Retail space (gross square feet)	3,821gsf
Residential units	60
Residential space (gross square feet)	57,323gsf
Spaces required in municipal parking structure	48
Surface parking spaces	0
Projected development costs	\$16,000,000
Potential financing mechanism: Debt; federal and state historic tax credits; Housing Development Incentive Program (HDIP); owner's equity; other sources	





## Mixed-use development: Petronelli Northside

A 135-unit residential development with 3,000 square feet of ground-floor retail would be built on the northwest corner of Petronelli Way and Montello in the first phase of development (1 to 3 years). Construction would begin before completion of the Enterprise Block and the new garage. People who currently park in the surface lot would shift to the temporary lot east of Montello.



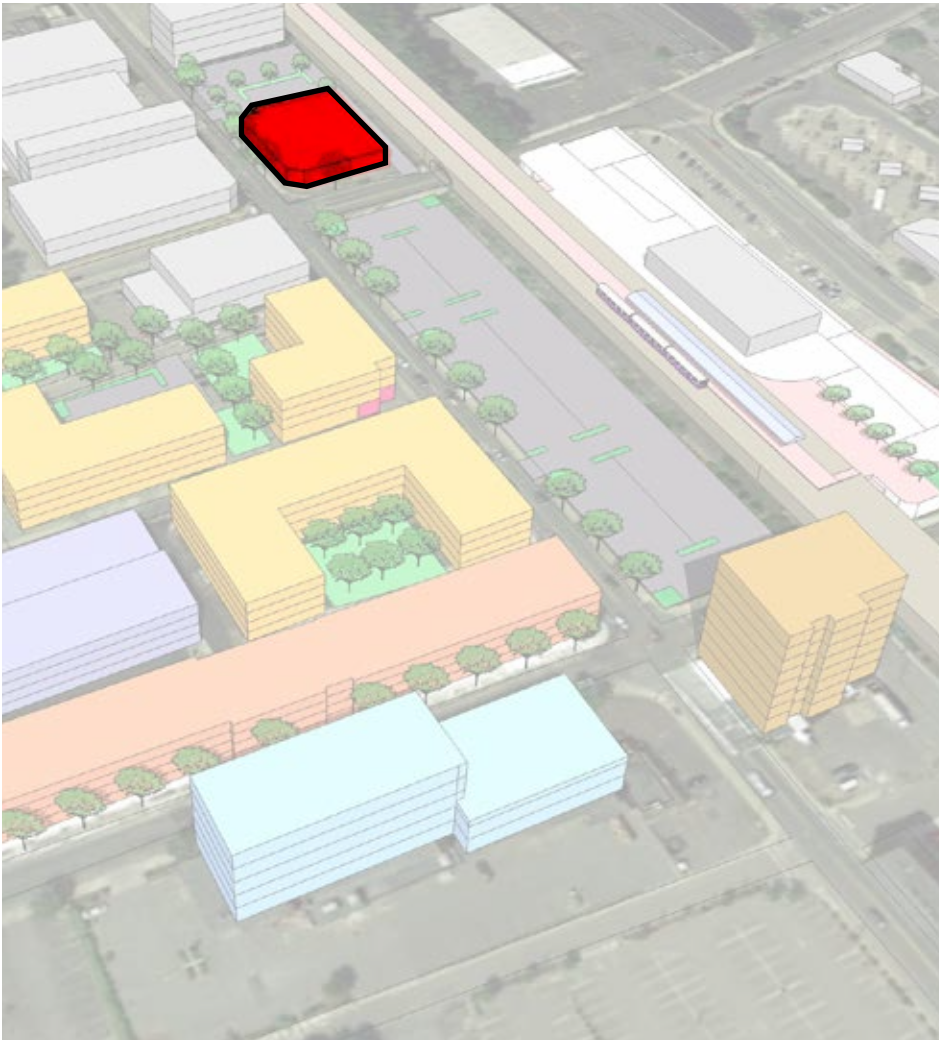
### Development Economics

Retail space (gross square feet)	3,000gsf
Residential units	135
Residential space (gross square feet)	109,500gsf
Spaces required in municipal parking structure	75
Surface parking spaces	33
Projected development costs	25,500,000
Potential financing mechanism: 40% affordable housing tax credits for residents making up to 60% of area median income, or approximately \$42,000/year for a two-person household in Plymouth County; conventional debt	



## New pharmacy to add a crucial amenity

Pharmacies represent an important amenity for both downtown residents and workers. Locating one on Montello would assure easy access for commuters driving by. The pharmacy will need dedicated parking and a drive-through window to serve the commuter market, but it should not follow the typical suburban format, which puts parking in front of the building. Instead, it should follow a few simple design principles—primarily siting the building right along the sidewalk, moving parking to the north side of the parcel, and providing landscaping within the parking field and on its edges—in order to strengthen walkability.



### Development Economics

Surface parking spaces	50
Parking field size (gross square feet)	14,000gsf
Projected development costs	\$5,000,000
Potential financing mechanism: Conventional debt and equity	





## Structured parking to support multiple redevelopment projects

Build a 400-space municipal parking facility to support the planned Phase II redevelopment of the Enterprise Block and other initiatives. The plan locates the garage on the east side of the site to better serve multiple users. The Action Strategy recommends the introduction of a new road across Petronelli Way to align with a central entrance on the north side of the garage.



### Development Economics

Structured parking spaces	400
Projected development costs	\$18,000,000*
Potential financing mechanism: MassWorks, District Improvement Financing, Municipal Bond Financing, private capital	

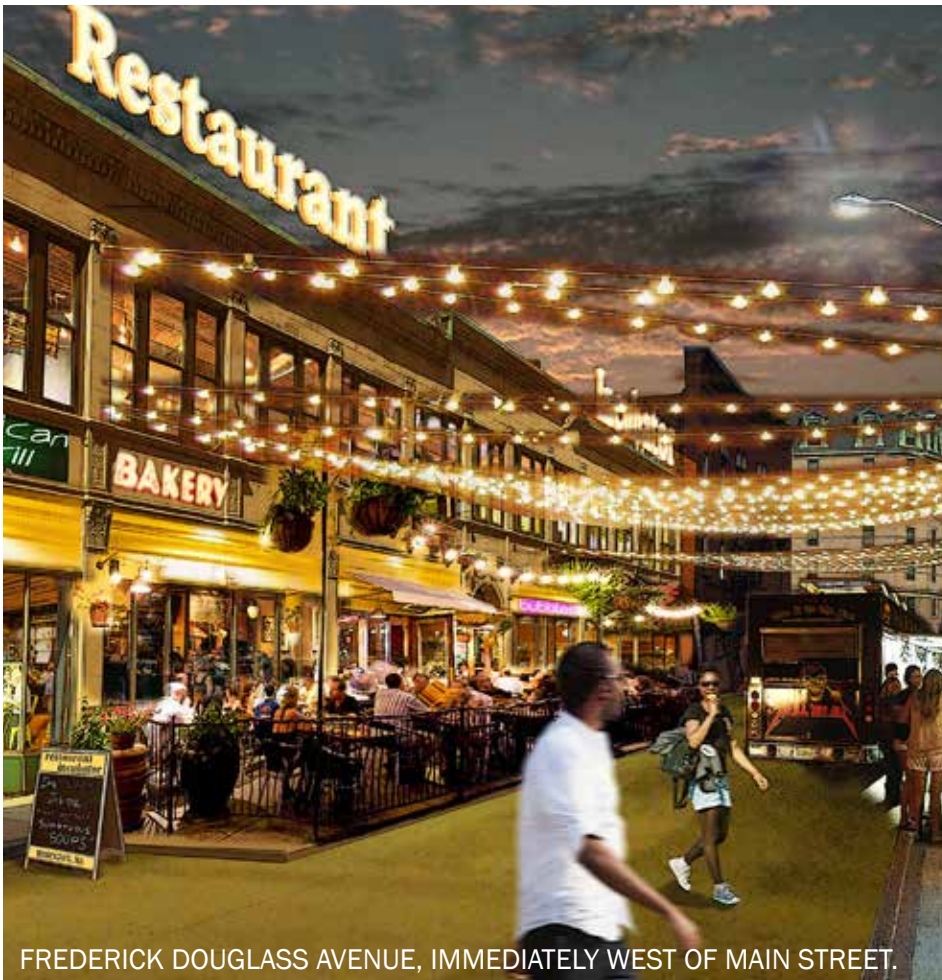
\*assumes prevailing wage



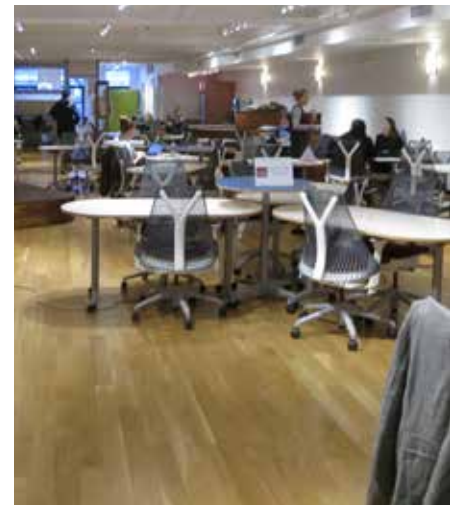
## RI

## Restaurant incubator and shared workspace

According to the survey conducted for this study, the most-desired downtown amenity was restaurants. A restaurant incubator would house a changing array of street-level dining options run by entrepreneurs testing concepts with minimal financial risk. An expanded commercial kitchen could also give other food businesses (such as caterers and prepared-foods entrepreneurs) access to a professional facility, helping them expand operations. The construction figures here account for structural renovation of the entire property, including a new roof, and the updating of major structural elements. Only the ground floor will be renovated for use. Similarly, rental income is only shown for the ground-floor space, with upper-level uses still to be determined—although the Action Strategy suggests exploring the idea of co-working space.



FREDERICK DOUGLASS AVENUE, IMMEDIATELY WEST OF MAIN STREET.

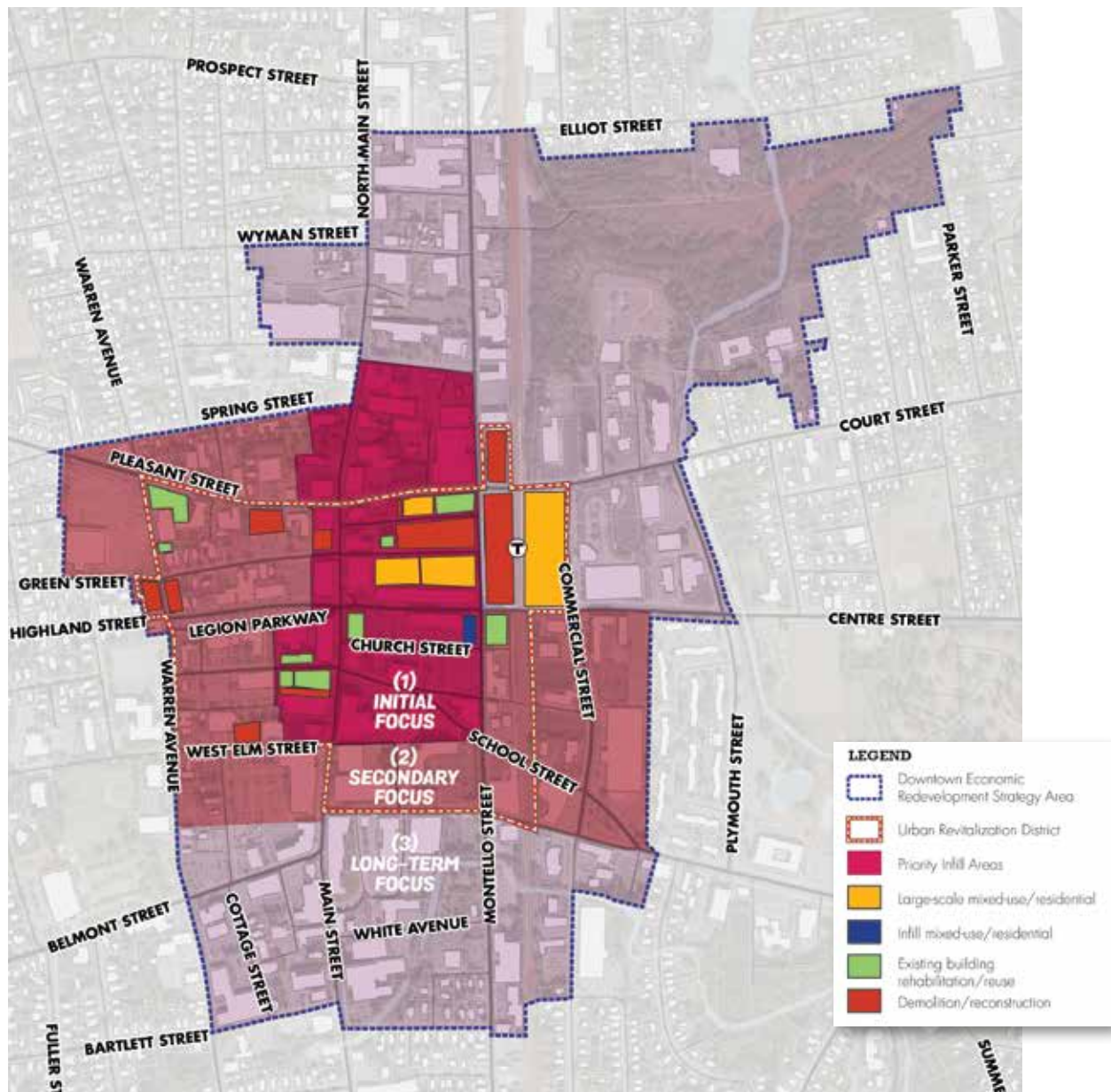


### Development Economics

Restaurant incubator (gross square feet)	3,125gsf
Parking spaces—shared with city lots	
Projected development costs	\$2,800,000
Potential financing mechanism: Conventional debt; grants	

## Strategic Infill

Downtown is fortunate to have so much intact historic urban fabric. Nevertheless, vacant and underutilized lots remain throughout the study area. An important element of urban revitalization involves filling in these “missing teeth” with new development. However, because the market hasn’t yet strengthened enough to support widespread redevelopment, support for infill projects should focus first on the catalytic development areas. That means Main Street and its immediate surroundings should get first priority. The next strongest emphasis should focus on the western portions of Green Street, Legion Parkway, and Frederick Douglass Avenue. As redevelopment success takes hold, infill sites elsewhere in downtown should receive attention.



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### **Main Street's “Missing Teeth”**

Two parking lots and a vacant parcel on the block between West Elm and School streets break the otherwise uniform street-front of Main Street. The City owns one of the lots; private parties own the second lot and the vacant parcel. The City should take steps to strongly encourage infill development these parcels in support of a walkable commercial district.

### **Legion Parkway/Warren Avenue/Vicente's**

Legion Parkway is a natural extension of the important Centre Street corridor, and it needs additional planning and redevelopment activity. The east end of the parkway has strong ties to Main Street; historic structures dot the center; but the western end at Warren Avenue becomes a no man's land of auto-oriented businesses with little connection to the areas around them. Redeveloping key parcels on Warren Avenue would knit the neighborhood to the west into the larger community. Recent investment by the Commonwealth triggered the rehabilitation of a long-vacant Star Market for a new Vicente's Tropical Grocery and a branch of the Brockton Neighborhood Health Center. To help create a safe and walkable path to Vicente's, the City should acquire or otherwise encourage the redevelopment of vacant lots at 102 and 108 Pleasant Street and auto-oriented lots at 76, 81, and 126 Warren Avenue. In the troubled Green Street area, adopt a similar approach but focus on rehabilitating several troubled properties to support the “housing first” homeless-assistance policy.



# TEN-YEAR REDEVELOPMENT VISION

*The Action Strategy identifies site-specific redevelopment concepts and actions to support these initiatives. It's important to keep in mind that a new development, from initial planning to completed construction, takes several years. Although the ten-year vision of the Action Strategy focuses on the blocks immediately west of the MBTA station, this amount of redevelopment—if achieved—would significantly transform downtown and lay the foundation for further revitalization success across the city.*







*This view along Centre Street looking across Montello toward Main shows a coffee shop on the ground floor of the new mixed-use development. Adaptive reuse of the building at 93 Centre has created residential lofts on the upper floors and new ground-floor retail. W.B. Mason has expanded its building, adding more jobs downtown.*



*This view down Petronelli Way toward the train station shows the 400-space parking garage (right) serves multiple users in downtown, including a new mixed-use development on the north side of the street, the full build-out of the Enterprise Block, and several other new and existing developments and businesses.*

# 7: Implementation Matrix

**This matrix identifies recommended action steps; identifies recommended key partners involved in each step; and suggests a realistic time line for each action. It assumes that the Brockton Gateway Transformative Development Initiative (TDI) Partnership will continue to engage and support implementation.**

Acronyms:

B21 Brockton 21st Century Corporation  
 BOH Brockton Board of Health  
 DPED Brockton Department of Planning and Economic Development  
 DPW Department of Public Works  
 HD Health Department  
 OCPC Old Colony Planning Council  
 TDI Transformative Development Initiative (MassDevelopment)

GOAL	STRATEGIES	ACTIONS	LEAD	RECOMMENDED KEY PARTNERS/ REGULATORY AUTHORITIES	TIMELINE
<b>RE-ESTABLISH THE FEEL OF A VIBRANT DOWNTOWN.</b>					
<b>Allow outdoor dining.</b>					
		Allow existing businesses and new establishments to pursue multiple options, including rooftop dining, café patios, food trucks, and sidewalk dining for restaurants.	DPED	HD, BOH, Licensing Commission, TDI Fellow	2016
		Change city ordinances to allow seasonal outdoor dining areas next to restaurants, cafés and similar businesses, when current right of way allows; require that dining areas be at least 6' wide and only allowed on sidewalks wide enough to provide at least 4' of additional unobstructed pedestrian passage; provide pedestrian entrances to outdoor dining areas at least 4' wide; comply with ADA requirements; prohibit rails and other barriers separating tables from the pedestrian flow (unless required by law for alcohol sales); and prohibit any permanent construction in the unobstructed pedestrian passage zone.	DPED	B21, Metro South Chamber, TDI Fellow	2016



GOAL	STRATEGIES	ACTIONS	LEAD	RECOMMENDED KEY PARTNERS/ REGULATORY AUTHORITIES	TIMELINE
<b>Improve streetscapes.</b>					
		Establish minimum and maximum widths for sidewalk “zones,” including a Transition Zone extending from building façades for benches, fountains and café signs; an unobstructed Pedestrian Travel Zone; a Furnishing Zone to accommodate street trees, benches, landscaping, transit stops, street signs, light posts and mailboxes, as well as temporary and/or movable objects; and a Curb Zone with a standard width of 6".	DPED	DPW, OCPC, TDI Fellow	2016-2017
		Expand the maximum projection of awnings allowed over sidewalks beyond 12 inches.	DPED		2016-2017
		Adopt a Complete Streets Ordinance and street design guidelines that emphasizes equity among modes (pedestrian, bike, transit and private vehicular).	DPED	DPW, OCPC	2016-2017
		Manage stormwater with green infrastructure (see “Establish green stormwater and sustainable infrastructure standards for new development,” below).	DPED	DPW, OCPC	2016-2017
		Create street tree guidelines that define requirements to ensure street tree health and growth, including recommended species, spacing in different settings, planting methods, minimum soil depth and maximum soil compaction.	DPED	DPW; local landscape architects	2016-2017
		Improve pedestrian lighting (see “Add more and better lighting,” below).	DPED	DPW	2017-2018
		Consult urban design professionals, other municipalities, local business owners and the public to develop further streetscape and public realm enhancements (see “Create a connected, inviting public realm,” below).	B21	TDI Fellow	
<b>Create one or two connected walking streets.</b>					
		Identify at least two intersecting streets to pilot streetscape and public realm enhancements recommended in this Strategic Action Plan.	DPED	OCPC	2016-2017
		Use both tactical, temporary strategies (including banners, hanging planters, temporary public art, and events) and permanent infrastructure improvements (see “Improve Streetscapes,” above) to create “walkable” environments that attract pedestrians	TDI Fellow	DPED; City of Brockton, Brockton Garden Club, Brockton Arts, Enso Flats, Centre50	Ongoing

GOAL	STRATEGIES	ACTIONS	LEAD	RECOMMENDED KEY PARTNERS/ REGULATORY AUTHORITIES	TIMELINE
Restore historic buildings/create a historic district.					
		Consult with officials in Providence, New Bedford, Lawrence, Lowell or North Adams on successful strategies for rehabilitating historic buildings with new uses.	TDI Fellow	City of Brockton; Historic Commission	2016
		Consult with preservation code officials, Massachusetts State Historic Preservation Office staff and National Park Service staff on meeting rehabilitation code requirements (www.nps.gov/tps/standards/applying-rehabilitation/successful-rehab/codes.htm).	TDI Fellow	City of Brockton; Historic Commission; State Historic Preservation Office	Ongoing
		Pursue Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund grants to support the preservation of downtown sites listed on the State Register of Historic Places.	TDI Fellow	City of Brockton	Ongoing
		Pursue National Trust Preservation grants to provide seed money for preservation projects.	TDI Fellow	City of Brockton	Ongoing
Fill in “missing teeth” and replace buildings that detract.					
		Identify vacant lots, surface parking lots and buildings that do not embody the vision of the Strategic Action Plan and Urban Renewal Plan.	TDI Fellow	City of Brockton; Metro South Chamber	Completed as part of URP
		Work with landowners of underutilized properties and developers to encourage denser redevelopment on those sites.	TDI Fellow	City of Brockton; Metro South Chamber	2016-2018
Provide structured parking to support new and denser development.					
		Follow the recommendations of this plan to incorporate structured parking in a phased development plan to ensure that both new and existing residential and business tenants have the parking they need.	DPED	City of Brockton; State funding agencies; TDI Fellow; BRA; developers	2016-2018
Create a connected, inviting public realm.					
		See “Improve streetscapes,” above.			
		Consult urban design professionals, other municipalities, business owners and the public to develop robust form-based codes and ordinances that embody the intentions of the Strategic Action Plan and that set form-based thresholds for building facades, sidewalks, street furnishings, lighting and pavement materials. Require new development to conform to standards.	DPED	TDI Fellow, B21	2016-2017
		Ensure that city ordinances allow for lighting that suites a pedestrian scale and that expresses the character of downtown, including street lamps as well as string lights that cross the public realm in appropriate circumstances	DPED	TDI Fellow	2016-2017

GOAL	STRATEGIES			
		ACTIONS	LEAD	RECOMMENDED KEY PARTNERS/ REGULATORY AUTHORITIES
		Require building frontages to meet “transparency” thresholds with windows and glass doorways.	TDI Fellow	DPED
				Ongoing with new development and rehabilitation initiatives
<b>CONTINUE TO IMPROVE PUBLIC SAFETY.</b>				
		<b>Increase the visibility of public safety efforts with foot and/or bike patrols.</b>		
		Establish a bicycle and/or foot safety team with regularly scheduled patrols of specified downtown areas.	TDI Fellow	City of Brockton with support from Police Dept.
		Train staff and volunteers on the foot safety team to be friendly and inviting to law-abiding pedestrians in order to increase perceptions of safety.	TDI Fellow	City of Brockton with support from Police Dept.
		<b>Create a corps of Clean, Green, and Safe Ambassadors.</b>		
		Seek funding from job-training, community development and/or small and local business development grants to establish a “Clean, Green and Safe” team. Sources might include grants from the Massachusetts Growth Capital Corporation, <a href="http://www.massgcc.com/pdfs/MGCC-SmallBusinessAssistanceRFP-FY2016.pdf">www.massgcc.com/pdfs/MGCC-SmallBusinessAssistanceRFP-FY2016.pdf</a> .	TDI Fellow	City of Brockton
		Hire local individuals familiar with downtown to join the crew of ambassadors.	TDI Fellow	City of Brockton
		<b>Add more and better lighting.</b>		
		Create a downtown district lighting plan; recommend the use of “warmer” lighting (establish temperature thresholds, e.g., lighting temperature must be lower than 4000K); recommend the use of energy-efficient or LED fixtures; recommend light pole and fixture designs that reflect the character of downtown; recommend spacing and height of fixtures for different streetscape typologies.	DPED	DPW; local landscape architects
		Amend ordinances to require that new development follows the downtown lighting plan recommendations as they are developed.	DPED	City of Brockton



GOAL	STRATEGIES				
		ACTIONS	LEAD	RECOMMENDED KEY PARTNERS/ REGULATORY AUTHORITIES	
				TIMELINE	
Develop and install a coordinated system of directional signs.					
		Create a working group or committee to establish a signage and wayfinding strategy for downtown and to identify potential ways to fund it. As an example of a signage and wayfinding strategy, review Concord’s 2013: <a href="http://www.mass.gov/hed/docs/dhcd/cd/mdi/2013concord.pdf">www.mass.gov/hed/docs/dhcd/cd/mdi/2013concord.pdf</a> .	TDI Fellow	City of Brockton; Brockton Arts; DPW; Downtown Brockton Association; B21	2017-2018
		Coordinate the graphic and structural design of wayfinding signs for downtown with the actions recommended in “Market downtown,” below.	TDI Fellow	City of Brockton; B21	2017-2018
Re-establish the homelessness task force.					
		Re-establish the task force to research and propose strategies to address homelessness in downtown, including a comprehensive set of policies for the City to adopt.	TDI Fellow	City of Brockton	Underway
		Include residents on the task force from a variety of backgrounds, including who are currently or who have been homeless.	TDI Fellow	City of Brockton	Underway
Improve services for the homeless community.					
		Collaborate with Father Bill’s & Mainspring and the homelessness task force to explore regional “housing first” policies; explore the potential relocation and consolidation of homelessness services to a new site; and support the development of a new site for Father Bill’s & Mainspring if it proves feasible.	TDI Fellow	City of Brockton, Father Bill's & Mainspring	2016-2017
Create and enforce quality-of-life measures.					
		Enforce a ban on panhandling.	Brockton Police		2016
		Pursue low-cost measures to increase the number of public restrooms downtown. Possibilities include prefabricated public restrooms and turn-key design-and-build public facilities added to public land.	DPED	City of Brockton	2016-2017
CONTINUE EFFORTS TO CREATE A DOWNTOWN BROCKTON HIGHER EDUCATIONAL COLLABORATIVE.					
		Work with Bridgewater State University, Massasoit Community College, UMass Boston, BAWIB, Southeastern Regional Vocational High School, and Brockton Public Schools to create a strategy to prove concept.	DPED	See description	

GOAL	STRATEGIES	ACTIONS	LEAD	RECOMMENDED KEY PARTNERS/ REGULATORY AUTHORITIES	TIMELINE
PROVIDE AMENITIES FOR RESIDENTS, EMPLOYEES AND VISITORS.					
Group two or three restaurants in the heart of downtown.					
		Identify potential restaurants that could be started in or relocated to a central part of downtown.	B21	City of Brockton; Metro South Chamber of Commerce	2016-2017
		Prioritize streetscape improvements in the areas surrounding new restaurants.	DPED	City of Brockton	Ongoing
		Promote new restaurants in a combined marketing effort.	TDI Fellow	B21; City of Brockton; Metro South Chamber of Commerce	Ongoing
Locate a pharmacy directly adjacent to the walking streets.					
		Create design guidelines that place building frontage along the sidewalk and parking behind the store to reinforce a walkable pedestrian environment.	DPED	City of Brockton	2016-2017
		Prioritize streetscape improvements in the areas surrounding the new pharmacy and connecting it to other centers of activity.	DPED	City of Brockton	Align with development opportunity
Ensure safe walking connection to Vicente's.					
		Support redevelopment of vacant and underutilized lots to create a street front that supports pedestrian activity.	B21	City of Brockton	2016-2018
Increase programming to “get people on the streets.”					
		Expand or at least maintain the existing recurring farmers market at City Hall Plaza.	TDI Fellow	City of Brockton; Downtown Brockton Association	ongoing
		Reach out to cultural organizations to identify potential festivals; offer public facilities as an event arena where appropriate.	TDI Fellow	City of Brockton; Downtown Brockton Association	Ongoing
		Collaborate with the Fuller Craft Museum to promote temporary open exhibit events.	TDI Fellow	City of Brockton; Fuller Craft Museum; Downtown Brockton Association	
		Create ordinances that support temporary and pop-up galleries and stores in vacant storefront spaces.	TDI Fellow	City of Brockton; Brockton Arts; Enso Flats	2016-2017

GOAL	STRATEGIES				
		ACTIONS	LEAD	RECOMMENDED KEY PARTNERS/ REGULATORY AUTHORITIES	TIMELINE
		Create ordinances that permit food trucks; work with food truck owners to establish a regular schedule of food truck clusters downtown.	TDI Fellow	City of Brockton	Ongoing
<b>IMPROVE CONNECTIVITY.</b>					
	<b>Rethink one-way streets.</b>				
		Model two-way traffic to populate PIF with MassDOT.	DPED	OCPC; DPW	
		Prepare a conceptual plan.	DPED	OCPC; DPW	
		Complete engineering and design work.	DPED	OCPC; DPW	
	<b>Increase reverse-commute service on the MBTA.</b>				
		Petition the MBTA to increase the number of trains running from Boston to Brockton during the morning commute, and from Brockton to Boston during the evening commute.	OCPC	MBTA; City of Brockton; other municipalities	Ongoing effort
	<b>Maintain or enhance current levels of BAT service.</b>				
		Ensure that the BAT is sufficiently funded to continue at its current level of service.	OCPC	BAT; City of Brockton	Ongoing
	<b>Add bicycle amenities.</b>				
		Work with OCPC to develop a city-wide bicycle master plan to identify routes, roadway improvements, and other bicycle amenities to promote safe bicycling as a mode of transportation.	OCPC	City of Brockton; DPW; DPED	2017-2019
		Refer to the Boston Complete Streets guidelines for recommendable qualities of bicycle lane/shared route characteristics.	OCPC	City of Brockton; DPW; DPED	2017-2019
		Require new development to include public bicycle parking on the sidewalk.	DPED	City of Brockton; DPW	Align with development opportunity
		Require new development to include enclosed bicycle storage for tenants.	DPED	City of Brockton; DPW	Align with development opportunity
	<b>Improve the physical environment from major downtown entry points.</b>				
		Focus streetscape and roadway infrastructure improvements on Crescent, Belmont, and West Elm.	DPED	City of Brockton	2017-2020
		As part of the recommended wayfinding strategy, identify measures such as banners, public art, or other visual strategies to improve the experience of arriving downtown (see “Develop a wayfinding strategy,” below).	TDI Fellow	City of Brockton	2017-2018



GOAL	STRATEGIES	ACTIONS	LEAD	RECOMMENDED KEY PARTNERS/ REGULATORY AUTHORITIES	TIMELINE
UPGRADE AND IMPROVE INFRASTRUCTURE.					
Assure easy access to the OpenCape network, and promote its availability.					
		Provide information on www.Brockton.MA.US about OpenCape and its availability.	DPED	City of Brockton/ OpenCape	2016-2017
		Collaborate with OpenCape and private developers to expand access to fiber cables.	TDI Fellow	City of Brockton/ OpenCape	2016-2017
Identify and upgrade electrical and other infrastructure within downtown.					
		Communicate with utility providers throughout downtown development; encourage simultaneous infrastructure upgrades during development.	DPED	DPW	Align with development opportunity
		Utilize sustainable stormwater-management strategies to reduce stress on existing storm drain systems (see “Establish green stormwater and sustainable infrastructure standards for new development,” below).	DPW	City of Brockton	Align with development opportunity
Establish green stormwater and sustainable infrastructure standards for new development.					
		Review the EPA’s and Sustainable Cities Institutes’ best practices.	DPW	City of Brockton	2018
		Engage residents in setting priorities and decision-making conversations about green infrastructure.	DPW	City of Brockton	2018
		Collaborate with local departments and state agencies to align priorities and codes to encourage effective implementation of GSI (green stormwater infrastructure) solutions.	DPW	City of Brockton; State agencies	2018
		Align urban redevelopment-related codes, rules and standards with the use of GSI.	DPW	City of Brockton	2018
		Develop a package of standard designs for GSI installations in public rights of way that address a range of streetscape types and aesthetic styles, safety issues, maintenance recommendations and regulatory requirements; ensure that design standards and recommendations align with the Strategic Action Plan’s intent to create a safe, accessible, attractive and walkable downtown environment.	DPW	City of Brockton	2018
		Review funding strategies for GSI improvements (examples include <a href="http://water.epa.gov/infrastructure/greeninfrastructure/upload/FundingStormwater.pdf">water.epa.gov/infrastructure/greeninfrastructure/upload/FundingStormwater.pdf</a> and <a href="http://www3.epa.gov/region1/npdes/charlesriver/pdfs/MAPCSWFundingResourceGuide.pdf">www3.epa.gov/region1/npdes/charlesriver/pdfs/MAPCSWFundingResourceGuide.pdf</a> ).		City of Brockton	2016
		Seek funding for GSI improvements from the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection Section 319 Nonpoint Source Competitive Grant Program ( <a href="http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/massdep/water/grants/watersheds-water-quality.html">www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/massdep/water/grants/watersheds-water-quality.html</a> ).		City of Brockton	Ongoing

GOAL	STRATEGIES	ACTIONS	LEAD	RECOMMENDED KEY PARTNERS/ REGULATORY AUTHORITIES	TIMELINE
MARKET DOWNTOWN.					
Provide information to new residents and visitors.					
		Create printed and online information sources that highlight the location of downtown amenities and provide a calendar of regular events, phone numbers and websites for local services, etc.	TDI Fellow	B21; City of Brockton; Metro South Chamber of Commerce; Downtown Brockton Association	2016
		Collaborate with developers and building managers to distribute this information to new residents.	TDI Fellow	B21; City of Brockton; Metro South Chamber of Commerce; Downtown Brockton Association	2016
Provide developer marketing/incentives/fact sheet packages.					
		Create a pamphlet that markets the opportunities and character of downtown Brockton.	TDI Fellow	B21; City of Brockton; Metro South Chamber of Commerce; Downtown Brockton Association	2016-2017
		Include a list of developer incentives, funding opportunities and previously successful redevelopment within downtown.	TDI Fellow	B21; City of Brockton; Metro South Chamber of Commerce	2016-2017
		Include a list of Brockton demographics, property values, housing supply characteristics and amenities including proximity to the MBTA.	TDI Fellow	B21; City of Brockton; Metro South Chamber of Commerce	2016

GOAL	STRATEGIES				
		ACTIONS	LEAD	RECOMMENDED KEY PARTNERS/ REGULATORY AUTHORITIES	TIMELINE
Actively “sell” downtown to local, regional and statewide developers.					
		Identify local, regional and statewide developers with the capacity to develop at the scale illustrated in this Strategic Action Plan and the Urban Renewal Plan.	TDI Fellow	City of Brockton; Metro South Chamber of Commerce; B21	2016
		Invite developers to tours of downtown Brockton; share marketing materials described above; maintain contact with potential developers.	TDI Fellow	City of Brockton; Metro South Chamber of Commerce; B21	Ongoing
Initiate a downtown marketing campaign.					
		Establish a downtown marketing committee to initiate a branding, events and outreach campaign.	TDI Fellow	City of Brockton; Downtown Brockton Association	2017-2018
		Coordinate branding efforts with the Wayfinding Strategy (see “Develop a Wayfinding Strategy,” above).	TDI Fellow	City of Brockton; Downtown Brockton Association	2017-2018
COMPLETE CATALYST DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS.					
Temporary surface parking lot.					
		Develop 200 parking spaces along Montello in the study area. Surface lots should incorporate street trees and landscaped islands within the parking field, and landscaping should allow the retention of street trees and perimeter trees when a lot eventually undergoes redevelopment.	City of Brockton	Brockton Parking Authority	2016-2018
Rehabilitation of 93 Centre.					
		Rehabilitate 60 units of housing in the building at 93 Centre.	Private developer	City of Brockton	2017
Mixed-use development: Petronelli Northside.					
		Develop 135 units of housing and 33 surface parking spaces along Petronelli Way.	Private developer	City of Brockton	2016-2018
New pharmacy.					
		Develop a new pharmacy with 50 surface parking spaces on the corner of Montello Street and Court Street.	Developer of national pharmacy chain	City of Brockton	2018



GOAL	STRATEGIES	ACTIONS	LEAD	RECOMMENDED KEY PARTNERS/ REGULATORY AUTHORITIES	TIMELINE
<b>Structured parking.</b>					
		Develop a 400-parking-space municipal parking structure on the east side of the Petronelli block.	Trinity Financial	City of Brockton, Brockton Parking Authority	2018-2020
		Introduce a new road across Petronelli Way to align with a central entrance on the north side of the garage.	City of Brockton	DPW, Brockton Parking Authority	2018-2020
<b>Restaurant incubator.</b>					
		Develop business plan to demonstrate ability to fund restaurant incubator.	City of Brockton		2016
		Establish not-for-profit entity to fundraise and support operations of restaurant incubator.	City of Brockton	Community Leaders	2016-2017
		Renovate property on Frederick Douglass Avenue, west of Main Street, to accommodate 3,125gsf of space on the first floor to function as a restaurant incubator.	Not-for-profit organization	City of Brockton, Public-Private partnership	2017-2018